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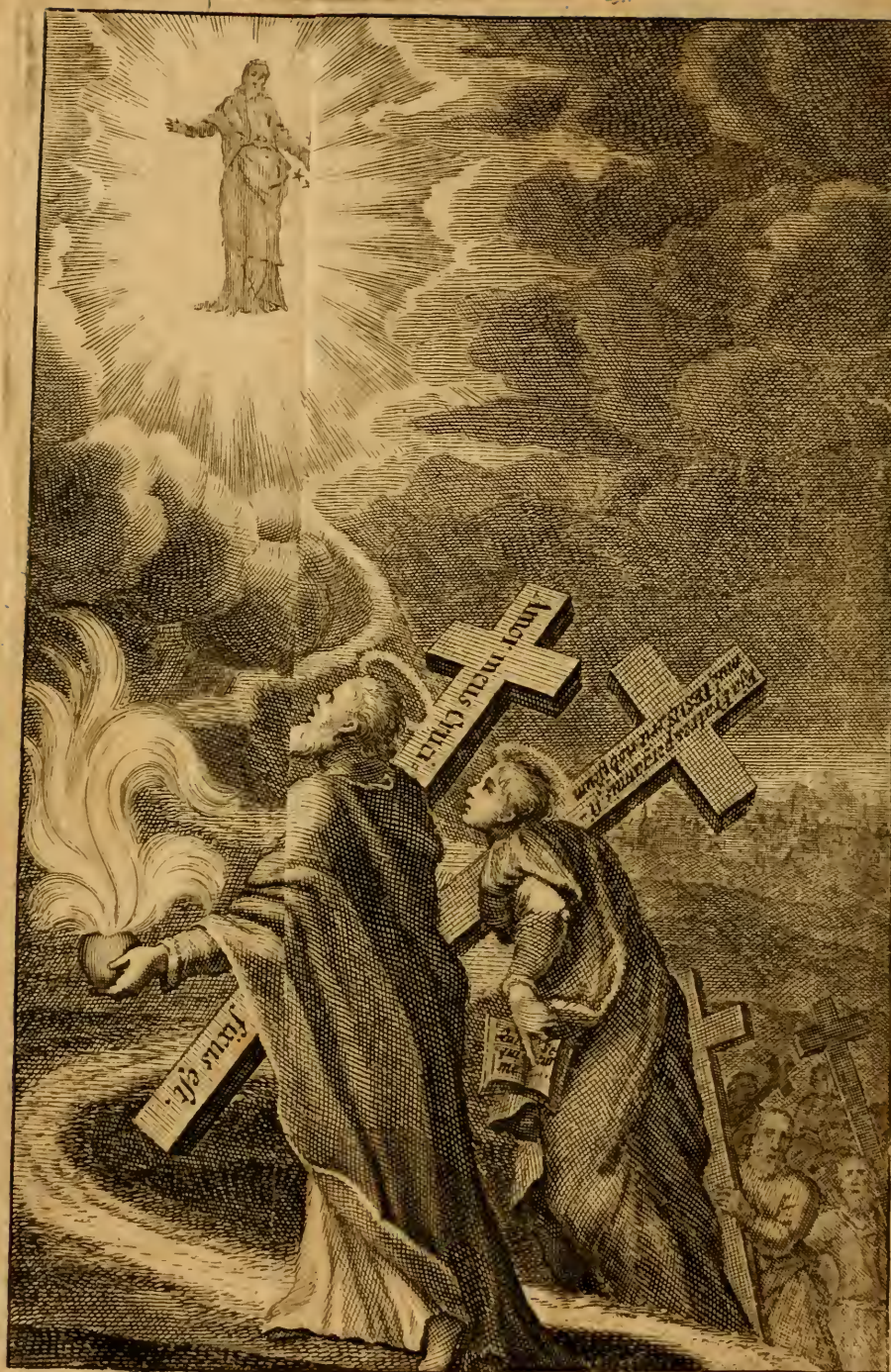
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Heb. XII. 2. *M. for G. and Sulp.*
 Αφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως Ἀρχηγὸν καὶ Τελευτῶν. *Frontis.*

THE
Christian Pattern:
OR, THE
IMITATION
OF
Jesus Christ.

VOL. II.

BEING
The GENUINE WORKS of
Thomas à Kempis.

Containing Four Books, viz.

- I. The Sighs of a Penitent Soul.
- II. A short Christian Directory.
- III. Of Spiritual Exercises.
- IV. Of Spiritual Entertainments.

Translated from the Original Latin, and recommended by
GEORGE HICKES, D. D.

To which is prefix'd,
A large Account of the Author's Life and Writings,
containing much of the History of those Times, never be-
fore set forth in English.

Summa Religionis Christianæ est IMITARI eum quem colis.

S. Aug.

The Second Edition Revised.

L O N D O N. Printed for John Nicholson at the King's Arms
in Little Britain, Robert Knaplock at the Angel and Crown in
St. Paul's Church-yard, and Jonah Bowyer at the Rose in Ludgate-
street, near the West end of St. Paul's Church. 1710.

THE
GENTLEMAN'S
MAGAZINE
AND
LITERARY COMPANION
FOR THE YEAR 1791

THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

FOR THE YEAR 1791

PRINTED BY J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD

IN LONDON

1791

Price 1s. 6d.

By the Author

of the

History of the

English Language

and

of the

To the Honourable
Sir William Boothby, Bar^t.

O F

ASHBORN-HALL in *Derbyshire.*

S I R,

THE Author of this Translation is a worthy Gentleman of my acquaintance, but one so very modest, and bashful, that I cannot persuade him to publish his Name with his Book, though he hath easily prevailed with me to introduce it into the World with mine. Indeed, Sir, he is modest almost to a Fault, though he hath no Reason for it, being well skilled in the Learned and in the Modern Languages, and versed in the best Authors written in them all, particularly in the Writings of the Old and New Testament, which he reads in the Originals, and for which he hath the greatest Veneration, and would be a great Ornament to our Profession, if he were a Divine. He hath a particular Esteem for the Writings of *Thomas à Kempis*, as almost all Pious and Devout Persons, both of the Papal and Protestant Communion, have, and as the old Versions of the for-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

mer Part moved the Reverend and Learned Dr. *Stanhope*, Dean of *Canterbury*, to translate it to very great Advantages anew : So an old Translation of some part of this, which is nothing inferior to the former, moved this Gentleman to give the whole another Version in more proper, smooth, and polite English, and much more suitable to the Speech of the present Age, as well as to that Divine Spirit of Devotion, which breathes in the Original, and hath passed from it into this Translation, as the Spirit of *Elias* did to *Elisba*, without any Diminution, if not with Encrease.

Sir, you'll find this Book, as well as the former, suited to all States and Circumstances of humane Life, and full of the same Divine Principles, and Doctrines concerning the Vanity of the World, and the Contempt that Christians ought to have for it ; the great and fundamental Duty of Self-denial ; Christian Courage and Magnanimity ; Constancy and Perseverance in perilous Times ; total Resignation to the Will of God, and particularly the Doctrine of the Cross, *Passive Obedience*, in its true extent, as comprehending all these Christian Virtues so contrary to Flesh and Blood, for which it is now so decry'd, and hated by the World. You'll also find some of the same Sentences and Maxims, as in the former part, and sometimes also in the same Terms. You'll likewise find him as great (or greater) a Scripturist in this, as in
the

The Epistle Dedicatory.

the former Volume, and that together with Sentences of Holy Scripture he delights in the Sayings of two most devout Writers, *St. Augustin* and *St. Bernard*. He heartily laments the Ambition and Corruptions of the Papal Court of *Rome*, and is very sensible of its publick and private Abuses. He's no Friend to Infallibility, as you'll find by his Protestation, and Address before his Fourth Book. You'll also find he was against Pilgrimages, Appeals to *Rome*, Mortuaries, the Corruptions of the Clergy, the Idleness of the Monks, and the Disputacity of the Schools in this as in his other Works, not unlike his great Patron * *Gerard Groot*, who was put under an Interdict, and suspected of Heresy, for the great Liberty he took in preaching against the Vices of the Clergy, and Errors of the Church. Yet nevertheless he was a great Lover of Peace and Obedience, waiting, I doubt not, as many other Pious and Learned Men of the Church of *Rome* then did, and now still do, for the happy time of Reformation, which they daily pray'd for.

It hath been observ'd by the Editors of his Works, and by others, who have written the Lives of Persons eminent for Sanctity, that a peculiar Blessing hath attended the reading of his Works. And indeed the Religious Exercises both in this and the former part are excellently fitted for Persons of all Ranks, and in every

* *Vita Gerardi Magni.*

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Condition of Life ; and though they are generally the same, yet they are here done more at large, and I think with more Advantage, than in the former Book. He speaks of the Nature of Prayer in a most excellent manner, and sets the several Degrees and Kinds of it, both Internal and External, Mental and Vocal, in a true Light. To be as short as I can, *Sir*, various are his Subjects in this Book ; Of the Lord's Prayer ; Of Christian Mediocrity ; Of perilous Times ; Of Communion of Saints ; Of true Religion ; Of Charity, whereof he hath laid down the true and adequate Notion ; against the interfering of publick and private Exercises of Devotion ; and in his fourth Book, he hath truly stated the Communion of God, and the Soul, and experimentally illustrated the same, together with the various Changes, Stages, Appearances, Progresses, and Hindrances of the Soul, either labouring after, or admitted to this Divine Communion. To conclude, *Sir*, here you'll find Vertue considered as in it self, and as in Christ, and the devout Man bearing his Testimony against humane Politicks, and Inventions in Religion, and the Doctrines of Perfection, and Supererrogation, and giving needful Cautions against *Spiritual Pride* and *Enthusiastical Zeal*, Diseases incident to Asceticks, in which they oftentimes bring dishonour upon the practice of Devotion. He also gives cautions against Melancholy, and prescribes the best Remedies against the excess of it, and he is very
orthodox

The Epistle Dedicatory.

orthodox, and exprefs for working out our Salvation in the time of this Life, and is alfo very orthodox in the Doctrine of Juftification and Merit, and teacheth plainly, that there is no other Name under Heaven given to Men, in whom and through whom we may receive Health and Salvation, but only the Name of our deareft Lord Jefus Chrift.

After this fhort and imperfect Account of this excellent Book, perhaps you cannot but expect I fhould fay fomething of the Divine Author, but for that I muft fend you to the elaborate *Account of his Life and Works*, by the learned and diligent Tranflator. There, *Sir*, the curious will find as full and particular a Collection of every thing relating to the Holy Man, as could be gathered out of his own Writings, or the anonymous coeval Writer of his Life, and three or four others, who fince undertook to give a Relation of it, befides the *Chronicle* of the Religious Houfe, whereof he was a Member, which he himfelf began, and was continued by *Buschius*, another Member thereof. There alfo you'll meet with a fuccinct Narrative out of this *Chronicle*, and fome of his other Books, of the Foundation of that religious Society, in which for 70 Years he liv'd a moft devout Life, together with the Principles and Practices of the Founder, and ancient Members of it, his Contemporaries, and their Advancement towards a *real Reformation*, according to the Life of Chrift. For this noble End, you'll alfo there find how they refolved to go-

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vern themselves chiefly by the Maxims and Rules of St. *Augustin* in his * Tract, entitled, *REGULA ad SERVOS DEI*, whereof the first Rule of twelve is *De Charitate Dei, & proximi*, of the Love of God and the Brethren; and so far I may say, it would be happy for the Christian World, were all Monasteries both of Men and Women, truly reform'd according to those Rules. You'll also find in the *Account of his Life* as much said of his Works as could be, with any Certainty; for his great Humility would not permit him to set his Name, as an *Author*, to any of them. There also you'll meet with a Summary of all the Claims and Pleas that have been made for others to entitle them to his Works, and their several Advocates; particularly of the Contests between two Orders in the *Roman Church* for the Honour of one Piece, that hath generally been ascribed to him, together with some Presumptions, which make it probable, that the first Penman of a great part of the first Volume was our Countryman, and that the whole was afterwards compiled and digested, as it is, by the Care and Industry of this illustrious *Devotee*; of the Place of whose Nativity there hath been also some Dispute, both *Utrecht* and *Cologne* having contended for that Honour, as the *Gracian* Cities did for the Birth-place of *Homer*, and as *Rotterdam* and *Gouda* both still pretend to have

* *Oper. S. Aurel. August. Tom. I. p. 589. Edit. Antwerpia, MDCC.*

brought

The Epistle Dedicatory.

brought *Erasmus* into the World. But of what Town or Country soever he were, he was an eminent Servant of God, and an illustrious Example of true Christian Piety, and the most genuine and noble part of it, *the Contempt of the World, and Worldly Affairs*; of which the great *Latin* Philosopher could say, that all true Greatness of Mind consisted in it, that it was of it self the most admirable Virtue, and that the whole Strength and Efficacy of a good Life was placed therein.

Wherefore, *Sir*, I now presume to send you this Book of this great and heavenly *Recluse*, as the best *New-Year's-Gift* I am able to present you with. I pray you to accept of it for its own intrinsical Worth, and as a Testimony of the particular Esteem I have for you, as a Gentleman, a Scholar, and a Christian, whose Choice is Religion, whose Study is Heaven, whose Life is a great Example of Piety in a very impious Age, and whose Endeavour is to adorn your Christian Profession with truly Christian good Works. The devout Translator desired me to send it abroad under my Name, because he thought I was a Lover of Men and Books of Devotion. I hope by the Grace of God I shall never disappoint him or others in that good Opinion of me; and for the same Reason he desired me to let my Name attend the Publication of it, I have presumed to inscribe it with yours, who, I am sure, have a great Respect for devout Men
and

The Epistle Dedicatory.

and Books ; Devotion being a great part of your daily Employment, whose Conversation is in Heaven, seeking those things which are above, where Christ sits at the Right Hand of God.

Methinks I see how the Blessed Spirit of *Thomas à Kempis* is pleased with me for presenting his Book to you, and beckning his Request to you from Heaven to accept and peruse it. Oh, Sir, may we both before we die, attain to the highest Form in his noble School of Discipline and Instruction, and to the highest degree of Perfection in the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, as he prescribes and directs. This is a Prayer, in which I am sure you'll heartily join with him, who, by many Obligations, is engaged to be,

S I R,

Ormond-Street, London,
Jan. 1, 170⁶/₇.

Your most Faithful

and Humble Servant,

GEORGE HICKES.

DIRECTIONS

Shewing how the

Books of *Tho. à Kempis*

May be read with

EDIFICATION.

Done from the *Latin*.

LSET a certain Time apart every Day for the Reading some Portion of these Books, according to that Method which the Author himself directs, in the Third Book of this Second Volume; and inviolably, as much as is possible, observe the prefixt Order. Let there be the same Rule both for these and the Four former Books of this Imitation of Jesus Christ. If any justifiable Business should take up or steal away the Hour that is for this appointed, let it be made

Directions for Reading

up in the next. For since a certain set Time is generally allow'd by us for the Refreshing of the Body by Food, Sleep, Recreation, and the like; and that we do this (not by Compulsion and niggardly, but) both willingly and largely; why should not also some Portion of Time be as well allotted for that of the Soul, which is much more worthy and noble?

II. Prepare thy Soul for Reading, in the first place, by Purity of Intention; whereby thou art to seek only the Edification of thy Soul; then by a short lifting up of thy Heart, or Ejaculation in Spirit, whereby thou must ask for the Light of Understanding and Heavenly Wisdom or Grace, which may fit thee for receiving what thou Readeest. For so shalt thou know and understand what it is that God requires of thee. And to this fail not to add thirdly, a serious Resolution of executing the Divine Will, when known, to thy utmost.

III. Read not herein cursorily and hastily, but Point by Point, sedately and with great Attention, not without a due Pause and Rest still interposed: that so, by the means of this thy stopping now and then a little, of thy recollecting what hath been read, and of thy looking about thee, and considering after what manner the same may be best reduc'd to Practice; there be Room for the Divine Illumination, or Irradiation. Observe that there are many Hints here given, which by the Reader ought

the Books of the Author.

ought to be wrought out : And see thou be not offended at the Style of this Author, if it appear too plain and simple, and somewhat abrupt here and there ; for as much as his Thoughts thou shalt feel to be solid, and full of *Uñction*. When therefore thou readeſt, read with Meditation ; and ponder all well in thy Heart ; proceeding leiſurely ſtep by ſtep, and praying therewith evermore in the Spirit.

IV. Moreover, let the Courſe of this thy Reading be for the moſt part Certain and Orderly: Flee thou that which is *Wandring* and *Deſultory*. It's the Sign of a bad Stomach, to find no Reliſh but in Variety of Diſhes, and not to reſt contented with one by it ſelf. For ſo is the Body rather deſil'd, than nourish'd. Read therefore the Book in order, which thou ſhalt take in-hand to read. Yet if any Part thereof ſeem to concern thee more, or do more nearly touch thy Affections and Manners, then to read over that often there can be no Hurt, but rather a great deal of Good ; eſpecially if there be added to it a Particular Examen of Conſcience.

V. Study to draw forth Conſiderations and Affections ſuitable to the Leſſon that is read, otherwiſe the Reading will be empty and barren ; which may enlighten indeed the Underſtanding, but enflames not the Heart. And hence now and then there ought to be inſerted ſome pious Breathings to
God,

Directions for Reading

God, whereby Grace and Strength may be sought, for effectually fulfilling that which thou readeſt. Likewise a Method of Practice ought by thee to be form'd, which may in the beſt manner conform to it. But moreover it is adviſable to ſelect ſome of the brighter and more eminent Sayings and Monitions; and to lay them up in thy Memory, that ſo thou may'ſt at all Times ponder and ruminare upon them. Which, as Arrows out of a Quiver in Season, thou may'ſt draw out (as occaſion ſhall ſerve) either againſt this or that Temptation aſſaulting thee, or againſt this or that Vice under which thou doſt chiefly labour; or which, even as Spurs of Virtue, thou may'ſt uſe for the Excitement and Growth of Humility, Patience, and Divine Love, together with the whole Choir of Chriſtian Graces, and Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

VI. Conclude thy Reading with a ſhort Aſpiration to Almighty God; that he may preſerve the Seed ſown in the Ground of thine Heart, and fruſtify it, ſo as it may bring forth Fruit in its Season. And that thou may'ſt not account too tireſom what is here directed, as if this would coſt thee a vaſt deal of Time; know that all may be done almoſt in a Moment, and as it were even with one Breathing of the Mind. If yet there be need of any Stops, grudge not at 'em: In nothing poſſible canſt thou better employ thy time. Conſider how in other things,
and

the Books of the Author.

and those too oftentimes vain and of no Worth, we are not ordinarily tired out with a little Stay. If the Readers hereof shall observe these few Rules, Christ doubtless will have more true Followers.

The Books of the Apostles

And the first of these is the Gospel of Matthew, which
was written by the apostle Matthew, one of the twelve
apostles, and was written in the Greek language, and
it is the first of the four Gospels, and it is the
first of the four books of the New Testament.
The second of these is the Gospel of Mark, which
was written by the apostle Mark, one of the twelve
apostles, and was written in the Greek language, and
it is the second of the four Gospels, and it is the
second of the four books of the New Testament.
The third of these is the Gospel of Luke, which
was written by the apostle Luke, one of the twelve
apostles, and was written in the Greek language, and
it is the third of the four Gospels, and it is the
third of the four books of the New Testament.
The fourth of these is the Gospel of John, which
was written by the apostle John, one of the twelve
apostles, and was written in the Greek language, and
it is the fourth of the four Gospels, and it is the
fourth of the four books of the New Testament.

A N
 ACCOUNT
 OF THE
 LIFE and WORKS
 OF THE
 AUTHOR.

§. I. **T** *Thomas* (commonly call'd) *a Kempis*, was born in the Year of *Christ* MCCCLXXX at *Kempen*, a little Town, or Borough, in the Territory and Diocess of *Cologne*; *Charles IV.* being then Emperor, and *Urban VI.* Pope. From this Place of his Birth he afterwards took his Name. They who will have him a Native of *Kempen* in the Diocess of (a) *Utrecht*, are hence evidently mistaken; he himself expressly asserting in his *Chronicle of Mount St. Agnes*, that he was of (b) *Cologne*. His Parents were of the meaner sort, according to the World; being such as got their Livelihood by hard Labour: But are recorded to have been Persons of great Probity and Piety; very well contented with their mean Estate, and glorifying God in it, but especially taking a most particular Care in the Christian Education of their Children. His Father was called *John*, and his Mother *Gertrude*. The Surname derived to him from his Father was HAMMERKEN or HEMMERKIN, otherwise HAMMERLEIN or HAMMERSLY; which the *French* have according to its Signification render'd by that of *Maillet*, or *Mallet* as it is written by us; and hence also

a

in

(a) *Bad. Ascens. Vit. R. P. Tho. a Kemp. c. 2. & 5.*

(b) *Chronic. M. Agnet. c. 8.*

in the Latin came the Name of *Mallcolus* by some Writers to be affix'd to him. There are some who will have this Name to have had somewhat Prophetical in it: And *Badius*, in particular, is very prolix upon it, spending a matter of two whole Chapters to this purpose. The Substance of which in short is this, How that both his Name and Surname were predictive and expressive of his future Holy and Apostolical Life, as in the near Relation he stood to *Christ*, by the two *Twin-Loves* of God and Man, and the Division in him betwixt the Inward and the Outward Man, that was so greatly perfected; according to the former cleaving wholly to God, according to the latter serving wholly his Neighbour, whether by Writing, Preaching or Working: So most eminently in that he was design'd of God, as an Instrument of breaking and bruising in the Souls of many, the Power of this World, and the God thereof; by the entrance of his Works as an *Hammer* into their inward Parts; which effectually so came to pass. The Seeds of Piety began very early to put forth, and to be taken notice of in him, by his Parents and Relations. His Mother in particular was greatly affected with it; and made it her whole Endeavour to encourage in him betimes a Contempt of the Vanities and Toys of this World, and to inspire him still with Affections for Heaven Day by Day, and in consequence thereof for the humble and holy Life of our Blessed Lord; till the little Sparks in his tender Soul were by this means blown up into a Flame, which fail'd not afterwards to manifest it self as he grew up; after various manners, to the edifying of all such as conversed with him. Also by the Life and Exhortations of his Father, he was harden'd to Labour: And was principally instructed in the Exercises of Poverty, Modesty, and Patience; which, imitating his Father's Example, he in a few Years became a good Proficient in. This some have thought to have given Birth to his most excellent Treatise of the *Three Military Virtues*, otherwise entituled his *Work of the Three Tabernacles*: As also to abundance of Passages in his other Writings. Indeed it is agreed, that his Father *John Hammerkin* was an humble poor Man, very industrious, modest, and patient; which was for certain an Advantage and Blessing to this our *Thomas* of very great Consideration.

§. II. Moreover it's notorious, that but a little before in these very Parts, that holy Man Dr. *John Thauler*, so highly esteem'd of by our first Reformers, had by his powerful Preaching began and promoted a considerable Reformation in Manners, and drawn great Numbers to follow him in the inward and spiritual Life of Christianity. Besides, there had been hereabouts newly set up certain Religious Societies, for the promotion in the first place of real and practical Christianity, and for the better Education of Children and Youth ; at which the Court of *Rome* began soon to be jealous, and the Author and Founder of these (whom we shall have hereafter occasion to mention) was put under a sort of Interdict by the Archbishop of *Utrecht* his Diocesan. That now both the Father and the Mother of our Author, were of one of these newly erected Societies, or *Congregations*, or at leastwise related to them, there are not lacking several Probabilities, which from some Passages in the Historical Part of his Writings, may be easily collected.

§. III. When he was arrived to the Age of Thirteen, his Parents sent him to *Deventer*, or *Daventry*, an University and chief City of *Overysfel*, where the Principal of these Societies was placed by their Founder ; and whither they had before sent his elder Brother, that (after his Father) was nam'd *John*, who having there gone through the Course of his Studies, became afterward Canon of *Windeheim* ; where he liv'd in great Reputation of Sanctity ; and is also by some suppos'd to have written several of the Treatises which pass under his Brother's Name ; as particularly those which make up the first Volume *Of the Imitation of Jesus Christ*. What farther determin'd both the Parents and Son to this Choice, was the Fame at that time of Dr. *Florentius* (the true Name of whom was *Leiderdamm*) whose Learning and Piety were mightily celebrated by the great Numbers of Students that liv'd there under his Tuition and Instruction. For he being President of the original Society of the Establishment abovemention'd, had drawn together a select Company of Persons piously disposed, that laboured after a solid Reformation both in the Clergy and Laity, by promoting at once the true practical Christianity, according to the Gospel it self, and the Pattern of

the First and purest Church succeeding presently after our Blessed Lord's Ascension ; and by propagating of Christian Knowledge in the most effectual manner, as the Times could then best bear, through the Charity-Schools by them in several places set up, the Distribution of good Books among the Common People, the Lecture Sermons occasionally preach'd before such Societies, and other suitable ways and means.

§. IV. So soon as he came to *Deventer*, being wholly on Fire with what he had heard related, his first Care was how to find out his Brother, that was several Years older than he; that he might by his Advice and Means, be directed both as to the ordering of his Studies, and the manner of his outward Maintenance ; for he had very little or nothing here to subsist by, which yet was no Discouragement to him, he being fully perswaded in his Mind, that he should in this place by some way or other, be sufficiently provided for, since the Design of his coming hither, was sincere and upright towards God. But it so happen'd, that his Brother was not at that time here, but at the Chapter of *Windeſheim* ; so he was obliged, having first taken his Instructions at *Deventer*, to go on to *Windeſheim*, where meeting at length with his Brother, he, by his Father's command, communicated to him his Intentions of becoming a Clerk (if it were feasible) of the then flourishing Community of *Gerard* the Great at *Deventer* ; and told him, How earnestly he desir'd for this end to obtain a Recommendation to *Florentius*, who, by the last Testament of the Founder, did at this time preside in it. With which Proposal, his Brother concurr'd most readily, knowing that this was no less the Will of their Parents, than the Lad's own Inclination, to have him placed out in some such Religious Community : So he mightily encourag'd him to pursue his Resolution, and offer'd him all the Assistance herein that he was capable of ; edging him on also, with the Hopes that they might come one Day to live both together in the same Society of Canons, under this new Reformation and Regulation.

§. V. Of which he had this following Account given him, which I have extracted from the (a) Memoirs left with

(a) *Vit. Gerard. Magn. inter opera T. à K. Jodoc Bad. Vit. T. à K. c. 8. Cave Hist. Liter. App. 61. du Pin. Biblioth. Ecc. To. XI. c. 5. p. 85.*

with him by his said Brother, and by *Amilius Burenfis*, Successor to *Florentius*, and other Elders of that Order, thinking it may afford some Light as well to the History of those Times, as to this present Book. The Foundation of this Society of *Devotes* (for by this Name were they call'd) came to be establish'd after this manner. In the Year MCCCXL was born at *Deventer*, in *Overyssel*, *Gerardus Grotius*, or *Gerhard Groot*, (thence surnam'd *Magnus*) whom, his Parents being wealthy, sent at the Age of Fifteen to *Paris*, as reputed the most famous University at that time in *Europe*, where he commenc'd Master of Arts within three Years, or thereabouts. After which he stay'd there some time conversing with the Divines: And being of a quick piercing Wit, and indefatigable in his Studies, made such a Progress in a little while as to be universally taken notice of and applauded. His Father hearing of his Fame from all Hands with great Joy recalls him home. Where he was no sooner arriv'd, but presently he gives such a Specimen of his Parts and Learning, both in disputing, examining, interpreting and teaching, as he was admired by every one as little less than a Prodigy. Having gotten great Glory here, he was ambitious of visiting other Universities, and learned Men: Whereupon he went with a great Equipage to reside for some time at *Cologne*; where living very high, and cloathed as a Nobleman, his Father's Allowance to him being very liberal, the best Company of the University and City were ambitious of entertaining him; And here by Conferences with the Learned, and both by Private and Publick Lectures, he grew daily into greater and greater Reputation. But it came to pass, that as he was here one Day diverting himself at the publick Sightings and Interludes, and was very intent upon them, there came up to him a Stranger of a goodly and reverend Aspect, in the Habit of an Hermit, and whisper'd into his Ear these Words,

*Non tibi, Magne, diu Spectacula vana placebunt,
Namque vocare alio —*

*Hold! Petty Shews not long shall thee delight:
For thy Great Soul to a far Greater Sight
Is now hence call'd away —*

And added, "Why standest thou here, O *Magnus* !
 " *Magnus* ! loitering ? Fy ! why mak'st thou thy self so *Little* ?
 " Thou shalt be Another, Man ! Arise.

*My Child ! What dost thou Here ? What dost thou See ?
 Be gone : Another Man thou art to be.*

This, tho' it appeared to him indeed strange, yet made no great Impression on him at that time. But not long after this he meets with a Gentleman at *Utrecht*, with whom he had been formerly most intimately acquainted ; but who being weary of the World, had chosen himself a Retirement in the *Charter-House* of *Monchhusen*, of which he was now the Governour. This good Gentleman (whose Name is not known) after a little reviving of their old Acquaintance, and reflecting handsomely on their former Conversation together in the Vanities and Follies of this deceitful World, very dextrously and closely accosts him ; till at length he prevails on him to change his Course of Life, and devote himself entirely to the Following of *Jesus Christ*. Not many days after this he threw off his rich Cloaths, and cast about him a coarse Gown when he went abroad ; cutting also his Hair short, and wearing instead of his Doctors's Cap, a black Hood that reach'd down to his middle. At the Sight of which, they that had before the most admir'd him, now concluded that he was run beside himself, and that too much Learning had made him mad. Hereupon some of the principal Persons of the City came to him to examine into the Matter ; whom he satisfied so well, as they departed not from him without being much edified. Not long afterward he went to visit the famous *John Rusbroch*, call'd the *Divine Doctor*, one indeed of little Learning, and of great simplicity, but of singular Sanctity and most high Contemplation, whence he came to possess a very deep and fundamental Knowledge of all the Mystical Theology, by the way of Experience. And he tarried some time with him at the newly founded Monastery at *Wavre*, near *Brussels*, where he was first Prior of the Regular Canons : And by him was fully instructed in all what appertain'd to the Kingdom of God in the Soul, and to the constituting of such a Society among Christians as might best restore the decay'd Primitive and Apostolical manner of Living. This now he was wholly bent

bent upon : And having such Examples before him as this venerable Man and *Thaulerus*, both almost of the same Character, he made haste to put the same in Execution accordingly. Returning then home, by the Advice and Encouragement, of the said *Rusbrochius*, as also of other Pious and Learned Men, and finding an inward powerful Call, he gave himself up for this End, to Preaching the Word of God ; by which great Numbers were converted : But some were much exasperated against him for his Liberty in Taxing the Evils and Corruptions of the Times. The Provinces of *Utrecht* and *Holland* were chiefly blessed with his Ministry ; where a mighty Progress was soon made, in order to a real Reformation both in the Clergy and Laity. To the obtaining of which, he thought there could be no better Method than to begin with the right Education of Youth ; nor any other Standard so safe as the Holy Scriptures, when duly interpreted by the Catholick Consent of the Church. This therefore he strictly attended to, and having an admirable way of winning on the Affections in his Conversation, a considerable Alteration was quickly effected, among the younger Sort, at least ; who were made willing to embrace an humble and laborious Life, rather than to enjoy all the Vanity and Luxury of the World. A great number of hopeful Boys, and poor Clerks, flock'd to him apace from all Parts, who by his means receiv'd their Education *Gratis* ; besides which he set every one a Task, which was to copy out the sacred Books, or else pieces of Devotion, at their leisure Hours from Study ; Paying them the just Price for what they writ, but not all at once, but at several times ; that so coming often to him, they might frequently receive together with their money good Exhortations to Piety and solid Christianity ; and also might be prevented from spending prodigally what they receiv'd at one time. He set up also Charity-Schools for Girls : And for the bigger ones he purchased a convenient House for them to cohabit in, where they were brought up in Spinning, Weaving, Sowing and other Womens Work, till they should be disposed of. He was continually exercised in the Labour of Love, always abounding in acts of Mercy, both Ghostly and Bodily ; for which he parted with his whole Estate, except a moderate Allowance which he reserved for his own Necessities.

He preach'd generally once, and often twice a Day: And sometimes when the Power of God was strong upon him, they say, he would continue his Exhortations to the People two, or even three Hours: And the Churches where he preach'd would be so crowded as hardly to contain the Concourse of all Ranks; Persons gladly leaving their Business and their Meals, to attend on his Instructions. At *Utrecht, Deventer, Zwoll and Kempen* he spread the Seed of the Divine Word to great Increase; and in this last Place the Parents of our *Thomas* having often opportunity of hearing him, were mightily edified; and being by him directed in the Principles of Christian Education of Children, first committed to his Tuition their eldest Son *John*, and afterward to his Successor this their youngest. Also at *Leiden, Delf, Goude and Amsterdam* the Word of God spread, and multiplied abundantly in Hearts that were disposed to receive the same: And Societies of the Devotes did spring up and establish themselves in these and other Cities and Towns thereabouts, according to the Rule and Form by him prescrib'd; yea even in *Guelderland, Brabant, Flanders, Friseland, Westphalia and Saxony*, within a few Years. Thus by his continual Labour of Preaching, Praying, Teaching, Exhorting, Advising and Ordering of Affairs both of the Schools and Religious Societies, he spent himself Day and Night to the Glory of his Master. But while he had farther and greater Designs in his Head, he was taken away from the midst of an evil Generation, the corrupt Priests, and formal Pharisees, who sharply prosecuted him for his boldly rebuking Vice, and constantly speaking the Truth without respect of Persons; leaving *Dr. Florentius Leiderdam*, a Person of a noble Extraction and Education, who for Conscience sake had quitted his Preferment in the Church, to succeed him, and to carry on what was by him so happily begun. He died in the Lord, when he was but Four and Forty Years old; this our *Thomas* being then but a Child, upon *August* the 20th *A. MCCCCLXXXIV*. His Works that are publick are his Protestation, concerning the True and sincere Preaching; his Conclusions, or Resolves; and a short Treatise concerning the Study of the Sacred Books; which are generally printed with the Works of our Author, who receiv'd them from *Dr. William de Sal-*
varvilla,

varvilla, Archdeacon of *Brabant*, who writ to Pope *Urban VI.* on his behalf, and after his Decease compil'd his Life. Besides which, there are said to be about Twenty other Treatises, still extant in some Libraries of the *Netherlands*, a Catalogue whereof is to be found in (d) *Miræus* and (e) *Sweetius*, besides some Pieces of *Rusbrochius* by him translated into *Latin*, particularly that excellent one, *De Septem Gradibus Amoris*, or the Scale of Divine Love.

§. VI. Now according to Dr. (f) *Salvarvil's* Testimony there were many Thousands up and down the *Low-Countries*, that had been convinc'd by his Preaching, and turn'd from the World to *Christ*. These he advis'd if they were single, to live together, as many as could conveniently, in one House for mutual Exhortation; and to call themselves Brethren and Sisters; and that they should be sure to earn their Livelihood with the Labour of their Hands. He would suffer none to beg at the Door, or to go from House to House out of Curiosity, or for their Maintenance; but perswaded them to stay at Home, and to mind, according to the Apostles Rule, their own Business; yet not for the sake of greater Advantage to set about such Employments, or to attend any so much, as might be an hindrance to the Duties of Devotion, or of their Station. He was zealous against several Abuses in the Canon Law, wherein he was well skill'd, and against the corrupt Practices of Ecclesiastical Courts; cautioning his Congregation earnestly against them, and against all whatever did not agree with the Poverty and Simplicity of the Life of *Christ*. But tho' he charg'd them to look unto *Christ* as the only Beginner and Finisher of their Felicity, yet he confin'd them not to the Reading of none but Christian Authors. For he recommended to them, among the Philosophers, *Plato* and *Aristotle*; but far the highest value he set upon the former, for the excellent Discourses in the Person of *Socrates*. The Morals also of *Seneca* exceedingly pleas'd him; which as containing in them a rich Mine he propos'd to the Members of his Society. In the Study of Physick, to which the Charity

of

(d) *Auctuar. c. 444.*

(e) *Fr. Sweet. Athen. Belg. p. 208.*

(f) *Ap. T. à Kemp. Vit. Gerard. Magn.*

of his Institution led him, it doth not appear that he concern'd himself with any other Authors than *Hippocrates* alone: Or in that of the Laws with any other than the Text it self. Tho' he was no admirer of Poetry, yet it appears that he had a kindness for *Virgil*. But above all, the Study of Holy Scripture was, as the Root and Foundation of all Christian and solid Knowledge, commended by him to his Followers. And here the Gospel in the first place, as containing the Life of our great Exemplar, was by him taken notice of. *Radix Studii tui* (said he) & *speculum vite sit primo Evangelium Christi, quia ibi est vita Christi*, i. e. Let the Root of thy Study, and Mirror of thy Life, be in the first place the Gospel of Christ, because therein is the Life of Christ. This was the Fundamental Rule of the Founder of the Community, wherein our Author, now young, solicited that he might Live and Die, and wherein he actually liv'd beyond a Man's full Age; and is indeed the Hinge upon which all his Writings turn. In the next place he recommended the *Lives* of the Fathers and antient Saints, particularly their *Conferences*, as great Helps and Excitements in the Christian Race; wherein the Author of the *Imitation* closely follows him in like manner. He read also the Writings of St. *Ambrose* and St. *Austin*, St. *Hierom*, and *Gregory* the Great, with those of St. *Bernard* and our Venerable *Bede*: And, according to the best Light of Antiquity that he could arrive to, establish'd such a Christian Community, as was highly pleasing to many good Souls, but to none more than to these two Brethren, *John* and *Thomas à Kempis*.

§. VII. *Thomas* having been by his Brother introduced and recommended to *Florentius*, was of him most courteously and kindly receiv'd. Who discerning him to be a very hopeful and modest Lad, took immediate care to see him provided with a Chamber, Books and Diet. So upon this occasion our little Devote was daily in the Company of the President *Florentius*, in whose House he was at first lodg'd, and of others the most eminent for Piety and Learning that conformed with him; and he fail'd not to make all the Advantages hereof, that it was possible for a studious and piously disposed Youth. An account of this is given by himself in the Life of the said *Florentius*, his Master, after the following

following manner, “ When for the sake of my Studies, I
 “ was in my younger Years arriv’d at *Deventer*, I inquir’d
 “ after the way to the Canons Regular of *Windleſheim*. Whi-
 “ ther proſecuting my Journey, and having there found
 “ the Fraternity of the ſaid Canons, and with them my
 “ own Brother; by his Counſel and Encouragement I was
 “ induc’d to addreſs my ſelf to that moſt venerable Perſon
 “ Dr. *Florentius*, the ſweet Fragancy of whoſe Fame had
 “ already reach’d the upper Provinces [of *Germany*] and
 “ had drawn out my Mind very much to the Love of him;
 “ as having heard a great many Scholars ſpeak exceeding
 “ well of him, and conſtantly extol his Performances in
 “ the Cauſe of God and of Religion. For both to the Eye
 “ and Ear he was a truly Religious Man; nothing was ei-
 “ ther ſeen or heard of him, but what tended to Virtue and
 “ Piety; and in the Eyes of all he was Graceful and Love-
 “ ly, as being a true Worſhipper of God, and a devout
 “ Reverencer of Holy Church. As I came therefore into
 “ the Preſence of this Reverend Father, he being mov’d
 “ with Pity towards me, kept me for ſome little time with
 “ him in his own Houſe, and there he prepared and in-
 “ ſtructed me for the Schools; giving me moreover ſuch
 “ Books as he thought I might ſtand in need of. After this
 “ he obtain’d for me my Chamber and Board of a certain
 “ honourable and devout Matron, who both to me and
 “ many other Clerks, was a good Benefactreſs. Now be-
 “ ing thus providentially join’d to this Holy Man, and his
 “ Brethren, I daily attended to, and inſpected their devout
 “ Converſation, and was greatly rejoiced and delighted in
 “ their good Lives, and in the gracious words which pro-
 “ ceeded forth from the Mouths of theſe humble ones; for as
 “ much as I did not remember, that I had ever before ſeen
 “ ſuch Men as theſe ſo Devout and Fervent in the Love of
 “ God, and of their Neighbour; of whom I obſerv’d that
 “ they had nothing in them of the Life of the World.

§. VIII. Then he acquaints us how he was even raviſh’d
 with beholding conſtantly the Heavenly Converſation of
 the Rector of this Devout Society, a Man filled with Wiſ-
 dom and Underſtanding in the Knowledge of Chriſt, and
 adorned with all the Chriſtian Graces, humbly imitating,
 with his Presbyters and Clerks, the Form of the true Apo-

ſtolical.

stolical Life, and of the *Church of Jerusalem*, when it was first founded. These therefore having all one Heart and one Soul in God, brought every one of the things which he possessed, or had earned by his Labour, into the Common Fund ; and receiving out thence again necessary Food and Raiment, were therewith contented, taking no Care for the Morrow, but enjoying all things in common, and calling nothing their own : For having here dedicated themselves to God, both in Body and Soul, they wholly committed themselves to his Care, and were *for his sake* obedient to their Spiritual Rector. “ They study’d, says he, “ to pay therefore a *willing* Obedience to the Rector, set “ over them by God, or (in his absence) to his Vicar ; “ with all their might to overcome themselves, to resist “ their Passions , to break the Motions of their own Will ; “ and to keep a strict Watch in all things ; fervently beseeching the rest to give them Reproof, or Correction, “ whensoever they should need it. And hereupon going to give some Account of their particular manner of Life, and therewith doubtless of his own, he tells us how they quietly abiding at Home, did most carefully employ the main of their time in Transcribing of the Scriptures, and other good Books : And how being much also engaged in holy Reading and devout Meditation, they in the midst of their Labour had, for Refreshment of themselves, recourse to Ejaculatory Prayers, and short Aspirations of the Soul, according to the Method here laid down in the Second and Third Book of this Volume. The first thing in the Morning was to go to Church, and there offering up to God the first Fruits of their Lips, and the Breathings of their Hearts, prostrating the Body they lifted up (says he) pure Hearts, and the Eyes of the Mind towards Heaven ; beseeching God with Prayers and Tears to be reconciled to them, through the Death and Sacrifice of Christ. So there was great Grace and true Devotion amongst them : and they edified many both by Word and by Example. And by Patience, bearing the Scoffs and Taunts of them that were yet in Bondage to the World, they won over not a few of these to the Contempt thereof, and to the Imitation of Christ, and Fellowship with the Apostles. In such Company as this, our young Student made no small Proficiency in a short time :

time : for very narrowly observing all what he saw, he took Notes of every thing continually that he remark'd in any of them, that might serve either then, or thereafter, for his edification in true and solid Piety. Which he afterwards occasionally made use of, not only to write the Lives of some of them ; but also in his Sermons, in his Dialogue of the *Novice and Senior*, his *Manual of Youth*, and some other Pieces.

§. IX. Now there was at that time an Holy Man, and most devout and indefatigable Preacher of God's Word, at *Deventer*, by Name Mr. *John Brinckerinck*, that had been a Pupil of Dr. *Gerard* ; who Preaching upon a *Good Friday*, and taking for his Text these Words of the Apostle, (a) *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely also give us all things ?* did thereby greatly excite our young *A Kempis*, among many others ; the Impression which it made remaining it seems upon him for all his Life after : whence he makes mention of it himself, with a very high Character of the Preacher, in (b) one of his Books, that was written for the special service and use of that *Congregation*. And indeed his Heart was so lively touched with this most melting Expression, that *GOD spared not his own SON*, in so pathetical and powerful a manner inculcated by this true Evangelical Preacher ; as it appears that he was constrained by the Mercies of God, to spare nothing from thenceforth of what was most dear to him, but to present his *Body*, with Christ's Body, a *Living Sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto *GOD*, as his *Reasonable Service*. Wherein he was also farther afterward established by another Passion-Sermon of the same worthy Minister of God, preach'd also in the same Church of *Deventer*, upon another (I suppose the next) *Good Friday*, from that Passage in the *Psalms* ; (c) *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits towards me ?* And what Reflections he made hereupon, may, by his *Acts of Thanksgiving* at the end of the 4th Book of this Volume, particularly as to the *Second and Third Articles*, be in part seen. But besides these

(a) *Rom.* 8. 32.

(b) *Lib. de Discipulis D. Florentii*, ca. 3.

(c) *Pf.* 116. 12.

these Two, there was also a *Third Discourse* of the said Mr. *Brinckerinck*, by means of which this our most industrious and hopeful Novice was confirmed not a little in the Resolution he had taken to *follow Christ*. It was a *New Year's Day Sermon*, the Subject whereof was, the Imposition at *Circumcision* of the Holy Name JESUS. Concerning which the good Man Preach'd as one *that had Authority*, and that was filled with the Spirit: So that hereby he both (a) comforted the Lovers, and according as they deserved confounded the Deriders of the Blessed JESUS; as was not without great Pleasure observ'd, by this his young Disciple. Who has thence given hereof a particular Account; with the manner of their ordinary Salutation of one another, both Men and Women, *in the Name of Jesus*. And this was afterward made by him the beginning and ending of his *Spiritual Exercises*; as may appear from several Passages in his Works, scattered up and down. But the last Chapter of the *Third Book* in this present Volume, seems to contain the whole Marrow and Substance of his Thoughts upon this Matter, according to the Doctrine which he had early suck'd in from the Mouth of so excellent a Person; who had taken up his Model of Preaching from that of Dr. *Gerard*; of whom he was not only a zealous Disciple, but a constant Companion also for several Years before his Death, and his Assistant in the Work of the Ministry. He therefore, according to the Principles which he had received of his Master, which have already been hinted, did in this memorable Sermon, to the Joy of some and Confusion of others that were present, demonstrate, (b) *That at the Name of JESUS every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven and things in Earth, and things under the Earth*: And herein set forth, that Christ was to be Loved and Adored by us, without any Competitor, because GOD had so highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name; for as much as this was particularly apply'd by him to the (c) Saints in Glory, as we are sufficiently instructed

(a) *Hæc dicens lætificabat amatores Jesu, & confundebat derisores ejus prout digni erant.* T. à Kemp. lib. de Discip. Flor. c. 3.

(b) *Phil. 2. 10. Nomen Jesu super omnia nomina exaltando.*

(c) *Et ante omnia & super omnia nomina sanctorum diligunt, & adorant Jesum Dei filium.* T. à K. ibid.

structed by the short Narrative our Author has left us of it. Whence it is I think observable, that so very little Notice is taken of any of the *Saints* in particular, except of the Blessed Mother of our Lord, in the devout Treatises of our Author, (which are above Twenty;) nor even of *her* in the most celebrated Piece of all, by way of *Invocation*: Not to mention the Books and Remains of others, which I have seen and read of the same Society; in all which, the means of reaching the Communion of Saints glorified, together with their Suffrages before the Throne of God and the Lamb, is still supposed or expressed to be a (a) Conformity with their Lives and Doctrines, as in the Unity of the Spirit of Jesus. However, it is certain that our Author, at least, who understood the Maxims of his own Fraternity as well as any, made all to center in the Imitation of Christ himself, and in seeking above all to be by his most powerful Intercession accepted of God: And that being a zealous and diligent Hearer of the Word preached, as well as a strict Observer of all other Duties publick and private, he made in a little time no little Progress; notwithstanding the difficulty of the Times, and several great Temptations, which by the Will of God were suffer'd to try him at Seasons; and of which there is some mention not only in his *Soliloquy*, but in other Treatises likewise of his.

S. X. Wherefore after that *Florentius* had thoroughly try'd him, having observed his exact Diligence in the Performance of all the Duties and Exercises that were laid upon him, and the great Sincerity and Simplicity which appear'd in all his Actions, he was so well pleas'd with him as to adopt him his (b) *Son*. And as such he took delight to have him constantly near him, and to send him in Messages of Importance; and sometimes also to receive his Dictates in Writing. Whence it has been suggested I know

(a) Si vis Deo & sanctis placere——inspice vitam sanctorum, lege doctrinam eorum ut cum sanctis sanctus fias, & à sanctis erudioris, &c. De Discipl. Claust. lib. 1. c. 15. Item de Imit. Christi. l. 1. c. 18. lib. 3. c. 58. & alibi frequenter.

(b) Nostrium Thomam filii loco habebat. Fr. Tolens. vit. Kemp. p. 8.

know by some, as particularly by (a) *Heserus*, that the chief Materials for writing the famous Treatise so hotly contested about by two Religious Orders, were first collected from the Mouth of *Florentius* by our *Thomas* while he attended him, who having taken down his notable Sayings into his Table-Book, is supposed to have digested them into that Treatise during the first Six Years after the Decease of this his spiritual Father, when he had most Leisure, as being not yet *Profess'd*, as they call it, or at least within some few Years after, and before the Year MCCCC XVIII. But this is contradicted by others, yet *Fronteau* seems to be of his Opinion, who has written with much Reputation in Vindication of our Author's Right to it, against the Plea of an Italian Abbot. 'Tis certain however that his Attendance upon this excellent Person, could not but be of a signal Advantage to him, in the future Conduct of his Life in general, and in the formation and direction of his Studies in particular, to a publick Edification. One day which was some great Festival, after the Service in the Choir was over, *Florentius* taking notice of a more than ordinary Chearfulness in the Countenance of his Spiritual Son, call'd him to him, and discoursed with him in private a long while, styling him his *most beloved Son in the Lord*, and mightily encouraging him to Perseverance, and to make a right use of all the Benefits which he enjoy'd, by a wise and prudent Determination of himself. And thus he was assisted and counselled by him upon all proper Occasions, growing up under his Care as a young Plant, diligently water'd by his Instructions and Monitions. Now this Father of the Devotes being in his latter Years very sickly, he by his Attendance upon him was edify'd exceedingly, and fir'd with a desire of copying after his great Patience and invincible Tranquillity: but especially by being near him in his last Sickness, he greedily suck'd in his *last Sayings*, and treasur'd them up in his Heart; some of which he has taken care to record for the benefit of Posterity in his devout Pieces, particularly

(c) *Georg. Heseri Dioptra Kempensis. Par. 1. in Anaceph. §. 2.*

ly in that which makes the Fourth Book of this present Volume, under the Person of *Philothæa*. And thus the whole Care of his Education from the Age of about Thirteen till Twenty continued with the good *Florentius*, who made the best Provision for him that was in his Power.

§ XI. For the first Years he us'd to frequent the Lectures of Dr. *John Behme*, who was Rector of the Scholars, and an intimate Friend of *Florentius*; whom at the end of the Course he offer'd to pay, as the rest of the Students did; *Florentius* having for that end supply'd him with Money, that he might not be burthensome or beholden to any. But Dr. *Behme*, acquainted with his Condition, and the Relation he bore to so excellent a Person as *Florentius*, would not accept any thing of him. This, tho' not in it self very great, that he might express however his gratitude to them both, is very circumstantially related by him. In which plain Account it is observable, that his earnestness to improve himself in the Academical Studies, *was such, as when he was wholly destitute of Money to discharge the ordinary Fees, he work'd hard at Writing, 'till he was able to leave a Pledge in the Professors Hands for security; it being a Book of good value which he had Copied: Also, that both the Justice and Generosity of these two Doctors, as of their Pupil likewise, are not unworthy of being remark'd, in as much as the *Principles* by which they all Three mov'd in this case, were purely Christian.

§. XII. And here he fell into a very intimate acquaintance with one Mr. *Arnold Schoonhove*, a Person from his very Infancy singularly devoted to God, whom the fame of Dr. *Leiderdam*, and of his most laudable Institution had attracted hither: For they were Chamber-Fellows for some time; and both the great Harmony and Sympathy of their Tempers, and the Heavenly Grace which was so plentifully shed into both their Hearts, made them extremely dear to each other. This Friendship which was here contracted, lasted all their Lives, and still more and more increas'd; and *Schoonhove* dying first, he writes the Life of his Friend, wherein having given an Account of his being settled in the newly instituted Hospital of Dr. *Leiderdam*, a-

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mong

mong the young Students of Divinity or Clerks; he proceeds to tell how, by the Assistance and Direction of the said good Doctor, they were plac'd near together, " At the same time, says he, by the means of *Florentius*, I came also to dwell in that very House, and I abode with *Arnold* in that Society for almost a twelve-Month, we being both contented with one little Chamber and one Bed. And here I learn'd to write, and to read and understand the Holy Scripture; and I heard Lectur's of Morality, with Treatises or Discourses of Devotion. Likewise I was mightily animated to the contempt of the World by the most sweet Conversation of the Brethren, and was daily assisted and instructed by the Pious Admonitions of *Arnold*.

§ XIII. There was also in the same House, at the very same time, one who had been a Merchant in *Flanders* and *Holland*, a Native of *Dusebroch* in the Marquisate, not far from *Wesel*, by Name *John Kessel* or *Ketel*, who had a mind to leave off his Merchandize, notwithstanding he thriv'd in it very well, in hopes at first of making a better Merchandize in the Church; as thinking that he might by his Interest, or by Presents, come without much difficulty to be made a Bishop, or a Royal Abbot. In order to which he had already, while a Layman, provided himself with most precious Priestly Ornaments and Robes, all imbroider'd with Imagery of Gold, such as any Lord Abbot might wear. But he, being after this touch'd in Conscience, and, by God's Spirit powerfully convincing him of Sin, better inform'd, upon the hearing of this new Institution at *Deventer*, quits the House that he had at *Dort*, comes away speedily hither,; and having parted with all the fine Trinkets he had bought, that he might distribute the price of them in Charitable uses, he now, instead thereof, buys himself very poor Cloaths, and also a Frock or Apron such as Cooks have, and thus accoutred presents himself to serve in the Kitchen. So upon his instant pressing he was accordingly receiv'd; and in this mean Station is recorded to have been a shining Light, and a most admirable Example of Christian Humility, Poverty and Charity. With him our young Student quickly grew to be familiarly acquainted, and was abundantly edify'd (as he owns) in his Company,

ny; tho' he was one but of few Words, and *Preach'd rather by Deeds*, according to what he has written of him, than by verbal discourse. He learnt from him the manner of his Religious Exercises, and obtain'd of him, notwithstanding his great Secrecy and Humility, a Copy of the same; which by this means is preserv'd, he having subjoin'd it to the Narrative of his Life, whence the agreement of it with the Third Book of this present Volume will easily be discern'd: nay besides, from the affinity of these two Names *Johri Kessel* and *John Gessen*, it is a conjecture of some, that through carelessness of Transcribers, one might be a Corruption of the other in some of the Copies, with regard to the former Volume; the true Author choosing to have it rather inscrib'd by the name of his Friend, who might give occasion to it, than by his own. Thus much however is certain that there was a most sweet Harmony in the Sentiments, Maxims and Exercises of these two Friends, whereby we may believe they did not a little mutually strengthen and edify each other, as may be gathered from his said Life; in which he takes also notice of this their Friendship; but withal, after his manner, speaking as little of himself as cou'd be, saying, *Hemas extremely well known to me when I studied at Deventer*. And afterwards he mentions, how one time this good Brother discoursing with his Companion or Friend (probably meaning himself) concerning Holy Poverty and Self-Abdication, it did, both from the gesture of his Body, and the alteration of his Countenance, appear evidently, that he must needs inwardly be all in a flame. And in his presence too it is not unlikely that these most remarkable words were utter'd by him, in his Cooks dress, and with exceeding Fervour and Pleasantness, viz. * *Am I not now made a great Priest, and a Prelate, who do give the Communion twice every day to the Brethren!* Signifying in this Parable (says our Author) that he prepar'd Dinner and Supper for the Brother-hood, and fed Christ in each of them. These two *Kessel* and *Schoonhove*, were the chief of his Friends while at *Deventer*: The first of whom died while he continued there, in the Year MCCCXCVIII; but the other surviv'd about thirty Years.

b 2

s XIV.

* *Nonne Magnus Sacerdos factus sum Et Prælatus, qui omni die his Communica fratres.* Vit. Jo. Cacab,

§. XIV. Another of his Acquaintance here, was *Gerard de Zutphen*, one of the first Canons of *St. Austin's Order*, and Clerk of the same Community, instituted by *Dr. Gerard Groot*; who has left us two Ascetical Pieces; the one of the *Internal Reformation of the Forces of the Soul*, and the other, *The Spiritual Progresses, or Journeys*, which are both Printed in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, and in some Editions of our Author's Works, who has written his Life. He died young, about the Year *MCCCXCVIII*, being then aged but One and Thirty. And soon after this *a Kempis* had Thoughts of leaving *Deventer*, now Death had separated from him two such dear Spiritual Friends as of a sudden; whereby he was still exceedingly more drawn from the Consideration of all Creatures, and of the Instruments in particular of God's Grace and Blessing, to the sovereign Fountain it self.

§. XV. But we cannot here altogether omit one *Gerlac Petersen*, or *Peters*, a Native of *Deventer*, who being attracted by the Clerks of the Community under *Florentius*, and by him and them instituted in the way of the Spiritual Life, was translated to *Windeſheim* among the Canon Regulars of that House. He stay'd three or four Years longer at *Deventer* than this our Author, and was very eminent for Piety, and so like to him, as to be a second *a Kempis*; whence his Soliloquy also, under the Title of *Alter Thomas de Kempis*, was Printed at *Paris*, A.D. 1659. which breaths an excellent Spirit, and has in it the true Life of Christianity, without any mixture of Superstition. His Life is written by *John Busch*, in his *Chronicle of Windeſheim*, publish'd by *Rosweyd* at *Antwerp*, A. D. 1621.

§. XVI. Such as these were the Friends and Companions of our Author at his first setting out, who left a Tincture upon him all his Life after. By these Examples set before him, he was much stir'd up to an holy Emulation, and was zealous to make the best Advantage of all whatever did occur, approving himself an excellent Husband of Time. He was diligent at Home, assiduous in the Schools, and frequent at Church; and in a few Years he made a considerable Progress, as the many Treatises by him written do sufficiently bear witness: And as he writ a very good Hand, and was most industrious, he got

not a little by Transcribing of antient and valuable Manuscripts ; and whatever it was he got in this way, the whole was by him brought into the common Chest.

s. XVII. Now it was a Custom among the Clerks of this Congregation, to have not only their stated Conferences for the Advancement of Piety, under the Direction of their proper Superiour, but also to have occasional Entertainments, or Colloquies, more privately for this End, at which but two or three should be present. A zealous Lover and Promoter of which, was our *Thomas* ; together with his beloved Contemporary *Lubbertus Bernerus*, or *Bernier*, a Person of inflam'd Devotion, and of a most pleasant and chearful Conversation, whose common Saying was, *Come Brother, let us now warm one another*, when he had a mind to put forward some Spiritual Discourse : Or, *When ? O when shall we again Fire our selves ?* For they were so earnestly affected, that their Hearts sensibly *burned within* them, while they were Conferring together about Christ, their Hope of Glory : So that they sometimes forgot themselves, tarrying up even till Midnight almost, being kept awake as with a Fire in their Bowels, sweetly melting them into the Love of God, and of his Commandments ; whereby they experimented, as this our Author saith, in themselves that of the *Psalmist*, (a) *Thy Word is Fired [or Fiery] to the utmost, and thy Servant hath loved it*, according to the Vulgar. It was also another Custom for them to take their Turns to serve in the Kitchen, together with the Cook ; that so they might be all Servants of each other, not excepting the very meanest Offices, and well exercis'd hereby in the Grace of Humility. Now when it came to him to keep his Week, in his appointed Course, he was not a little satisfy'd to have by this means the Enjoyment of his dear Friend *Kessel*, so long as he was living ; with whom he contracted an intimate Familiarity, while they were thus employed together : and profited in his Company exceedingly ; notwithstanding that this was otherwise a Diversion from such Exercises and Labours, as had in them a more apparent View of Edifi-

b 3

fication

(a) Ignitum Eloquium tuum vehementer. Pf. 119. 140. *Vid. Lib. de Discipl. D. Florent. c. 4.*

fication. And here there was nothing so mean that he willingly submitted not to ; and in particular he tells himself, how he often drew Water out of the Well (lying at some distance off) for the use of the Kitchen ; which he does upon occasion of a certain Man, who (a) tumbling into the said Well with his Head foremost, as he was sitting with several others upon the brim of it, and falling asleep through Heaviness, at a publick Conference held by *Florentius*, while he was making them a devout Exhortation ; was by a wonderful Providence preserv'd, being found upon his Feet (tho' the Well was narrow) to the great Astonishment of them that were present, and drawn up alive and sound. Our *Thomas* was not then present when this happen'd ; but his frequent drawing of Water from it, when he had well examin'd the Matter of Fact, was a good Memento to him to abide Vigilant and Attentive to the Exhortations of this Holy Man. And besides this, there was also a farther Advantage which he mentions, in doing the servile Offices of the House : Which is, that while one was labouring thus for the rest, all the rest were oblig'd to offer up Prayers for him. And for this Reason even *Florentius* himself would by no means be excus'd from it, tho' never so much importun'd : Who taught his Disciples this Lesson, by his own Example, that Works of Piety ought sometimes to give place to those of Charity ; and that an Humble Soul is capable of Benefit more by rightly doing the necessary Work of a Family, out of Love to Christ's Members, whensoever thereto call'd, than either by being at Church, or by Prayer and Meditation in the Closet ; yea that the very vilest Services of Charity, were to be preferr'd before the most glittering and most pompous. This with other Lessons of his, was most greedily suck'd in, and imitated, by this beloved Son ; as several of his Writings do clearly testify.

§. XVIII. Having continued here seven Years, the good *Florentius* died, leaving him, as it were, an Orphan ; which, with the Decease of his other Friends but a little before, made a deeper Impression on his Mind, than all what he had hitherto at any time met with. But before his Death he

(a) *Vit. Florent. c. 29.*

he call'd for *Thomas à Kempis*, and had with him a long Discourse, how he should dispose of himself. And having thereupon an earnest Desire to retire from the World, and to devote himself wholly to the more immediate Service of God, yet caring not to enter into a Monastery, as was the general Practice of those times; He went to the Mount of *St. Agnes*, which is iust by the Town of *Zwoll*, where was a little College of Regular Canons, newly set up on the side of the River *Oeder*: and carry'd with him a Letter from *Florentius*, written a little before his death, to recommend him for a Member of that House. This was at that time very obscure, being scarce known to any body; whence the number of the Canons, and those that inhabited in it, was mighty small: Which made it the more agreeable to him, who sought only where he might lie best hid, and have the Enjoyment at the same time of two or three faithful and pious Friends, with whom he could freely converse concerning the Things of Heaven.

XIX. Here now his Brother was already before him, which prov'd to him no little Encouragement. He receiv'd him in the Year MCCCC with abundance of Joy and Kindness; so that they both burst out at once together into this Heavenly Exclamation of Jubilee, *O how Good and Joyful a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* Some relate the occasion of his coming hither a little differently, and say his design in it at first was only to gain some Indulgences, which Pope *Boniface* the IXth had granted to the Church of this place; but that afterwards he had a great Desire to be admitted into the Society of these Canons, upon beholding narrowly the manner of their Life. However it might be, it doth not any where appear from his own Works, that he had ever any great valuation for, or dependence upon Papal Indulgences, but rather that he was absolutely against all Trafficking in the matter of Religion, and a stiff Assertor of Christ's Merits against all Human Confidence.

§. XX. Here he continued full five Years a Probationer, that so he might both moderate the Earnestness of his Zeal, and thoroughly also try how well such a sort of Life as he had here propos'd to himself, would agree with him; for he foresaw the great Danger and Rocks of entring rashly into such a State, without all that due Caution and Pre-

paration, which both Divine and Humane Prudence do absolutely require. In this time he learnt perfectly the Rules and Prescripts of this Order, as they were deliver'd by their Founder; the chief of which were, *viz.* 1. Diligently to read and search the Holy Scriptures. 2. In the Interpretation thereof to bear a great Deference to the Antient Doctors of the Church, such as *St. Hierom, St. Austin, &c.* 3. To labour after an Imitation of the Life of Christ, and a Conformity with the Primitive Christians, both in their Principles and Practices. 4. Not to mind much curious Learning, or the *Belle Lettere*, but to apply their Studies to what is useful. 5. Freely to protest against the Abuses and Corruptions both of the Clergy and Laity, as occasion should offer. 6. Not to take any Honorary Degrees after their Admission into the Society. 7. Not to accept of any Ecclesiastical Benefice, but to Preach the Word of God freely. 8. Not to study the Law, either Canon or Civil, unless for the more facil Compromising of Differences among Neighbours, and the better Maintenance of Concord and Charity. 9. Not to take on them the Business of their Friends or Relations, but where Mercy, Piety and Justice did strictly require. 10. In the Practice of Physick, never to presume to administer doubtful Medicines to any one, or in a case that is doubtful any whatever. Yet in case of very extreme Necessity, and where no body else could be had, there this was sometimes dispensed with; and they being strongly solicited, were at liberty to give their Judgment and Help according to the best of their Knowledge. Besides which, there are a great many other Rules and Maxims relating to this Institution, which may be gathered from this very Author, and from the Chronicles of the Order.

§. XXI. After this, in the sixth Year, he took on him the Habit of the Regulars of *St. Austin* in that place: And in the Seventh bound himself by Vow, being admitted to it on the 10th of *June*, in the Year *MCCCCVI.* whereof he makes mention towards the end of this present Volume, in the concluding Thanksgiving to his excellent Soliloquy; where applying to himself and his *Religious Vocation* the Words of the Apostle, "*Ye see your CALLING, Brethren, how it is, that not many wise Men after the Flesh; not many mighty, not*"

“ many noble are called : but GOD hath chosen the foolish things
 “ of the World to confound the wise ; and the weak things there-
 “ of, to confound the mighty. Which things I consider as to
 “ my self, who being contemptible and useles to this
 “ World, am snatched away from the Shipwreck thereof,
 “ through thy Holy Calling, and (a) admitted into the Col-
 “ lege and Society of thy Devoted Servants. And that I
 “ might not go back again, I have freely and of my own
 “ accord (b) bound my self by a VOW. And that the Reader
 may more clearly understand with what Frame of Spirit
 he enter’d upon this, it may not be perhaps amiss here to
 insert the very Form of his Renunciation, as it is found in
 his Works, notwithstanding somewhat that will seem pret-
 ty particular and uncouth in it ; and that must by no
 means be strain’d beyond the Gospel-meaning.

The Form of his RENUNCIATION, &c.

I. * O Lord Jesu Christ, my Hope, and my
 whole Refuge, the Delight of my Life,
 and Information of my Manners ; this Day
 do I (N. N.) renounce all things that are in the
 World, for the Love of Thee : And this I long
 to perform to the Honour of thy Name. I re-
 nounce in the first place all my Friends, Parents,
 Relations and Kinsfolk ; all that are near and
 dear known and familiar to me : also all Cities,
 Towns, Castles, Castellanies, and Country
 Seats, with all Mountains and Vallies, Ri-
 vers and Fountains, Fields, Meadows and
 Woods, should they at any time be mine, or
 offered to me ; all Ornaments, rich household
 Stuff, pleasant and magnificent Houses ; all
 Psalteries, Harps, Organs, Musicians, Songs,
 Gar-

(a) *Tuo merui sociari Collegio — quod utique non meis
 meritis, sed, &c. c. 25. n. 3. p. 211. b. Ed. Ant. 1574.*

(b) *Voto me sponte constrinxi. ib.*

* *Opusc. Sept. Orat. I. & de Discipl. Claustr. Lib. iv. c. 6.*

Garlands, Perfumes; all Merriments, Clubs, Banquets, Conversations, Visits, Salutations, Favours, Honours and Delights of Men; all Buffooneries, Poiles, Humours, Plays, Jestes, Wandrings, Excursions, Tumults, useles Occupations; all Riches, Goods, Emoluments, Properties, Charges, Offices, Dignities, Solacements, Recreations from without, and all whatever either the flesh can be tempted, allured and delighted with, or the Spirit hindered, molested and defiled by.

II. This day moreover I make choise of thee for my God and Protector, for the Governour of my Life; for the Provider of all my Necessaries; for the Comforter of all my Sorrows, Anguishes and Temptations, as also of all my Labours, wherewith I am obliged to labour all the Days of my Life, for the Love of Thee, and the Salvation of my Soul. Thou art my Refuge, my House, my City, my Habitation; thou art my Food, thou art my Drink, thou only art my Rest and my Refreshment: Thou art my beloved Companion, my intimate Friend, my nearest Relation and Kinsman; thou art to me Brother and Sister; thou art Father and Patron. Thou art the Shepherd and Guardian of my whole Life, to whom I faithfully commend my self, with all that is mine; because there is no Salvation out of Thee, nor Life safe but with Thee. May therefore thy Mercy, O Lord, be upon me, and thy Grace accompany me ever in all things: May also thine Eye be upon me as well by Night as by Day, and may thy Hand always protect me both in Prosperity and Adversity; and vouchsafe to lead me the straitest way into the House of the Habitation of thy Glory; where I may praise and blest thee World without End.

s. XXII. This being then transacted in private betwixt God and his own Conscience, his publick Profession and Vow hereupon ensued, as the Fruit thereof. Which, according to the (b) Form that was then receiv'd, was made in the manner following, or in Terms equivalent, before the great Altar, in the Collegiate Church of St. Agnes, viz. *In the Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST. Amen. In the Year from his Birth N. [such a Day of such a Month] 7. N. of N. do hereby profess (b) my Stedfastness, and Conversion of my Manners, and Obedience after the Rule of St. Austin, before GOD and the whole Heavenly Court, in the presence of the Reverend Father N. and other Fathers and Brethren of this Congregation of Canon Regulars, under the Rule aforesaid. In faith whereof I have hereunto subscribed with mine own Hand, the Day and Year above-written. And at the same time the usual Oath of Canonical Obedience to his Prelate was by him taken; which was, (c) Reverend Sir, I promise you Obedience until Death in what is GOOD. Concerning which, he has abundantly declar'd his own constant Sentiment in many (d) places of his Writings, which the Reader may consult; and wherein he will find satisfaction, as to the use that was by him made of it, whether it was to be praised or not. Whereof I shall say no more, but that the Yoak he took upon him was so far from being uneasy, that it was most pleasant to him; and that he has said such a world of fine things for it, as if he that reads be not made in love with it, 'tis most plain that He was. And now for Ratification of all this in the most solemn manner, he took, according to Custom, the Sacrament of Christ's Body, as the Seal to what he had voluntarily and frankly bound himself, after so long and full Consideration. This Day was kept ever afterward by him as a great Sabbath, and Holy Rest, with Devotion more than ordinary, and renewed Dedication of himself, by an earnest and*

(a) Jo. Caramnel Lobkowitz *Theologia Regularis. lib. 7. disp. 42. n. 516.*

(b) *Stabilitatem meam, & conversionem morum meorum, & obedientiam secundum Regulam. ib.*

(c) *Reverende Domine, promitto vobis Obedientiam IN BONO, usque ad mortem. Id. n. 514.*

(d) *De Imit. Christi. lib. 1. c. 9. de Discipl. Claustr. lib. 1. c. 4. &c.*

and joyful Confirmation of his most Solemn Vow, to follow Christ stedfastly to the Death, and by bearing his Yoak in this manner, to express his utter *Contempt of the World*; and also by Praises and Thanksgivings for so particular a Grace and Favour freely bestowed upon him, glorifying God, in the deepest Acknowledgment of his own Demerits, and the Divine Goodness. Wherefore he would say, on this occasion, "I ascribe This, Lord, to thy Providence only; and to nothing that is in me. Also: "It is thou, my Lord, that hast *called* me, and redeemed me out of this World, that I might thus serve Thee in the Society of thy Chosen: For which I greatly magnify and bless thy Holy Name, because thou hast so vouchsafed to *Call* me hereunto by thy Grace; removing from me the Burden of my Sins, and giving unto me Good Will, that I might be herein obedient to thy Holy Will. For thou hast brought me under thy Discipline (a sweet and easy Yoak!) softening my Mind with the *Unction* of thy Spirit, which the World knoweth not, neither seeth it, nor savoureth it. Hence likewise he would sometimes cry out in this manner, when he was made secretly to taste of this hidden *Unction*: "O happy and venerable Obedience! Preached and observed by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, saying, *I came down from Heaven not to do mine own Will, but the Will of Him that sent me*: And when he went to the place of his Passion, prayed thus with resignation of his own Will: *O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt*. And: *If this Cup may not pass away, except I drink of it, thy Will be done*. For as the Master prayed, so prayed also the Disciple. And remembering likewise the Word of his Blessed Mother, when visited by the Angel, he could not forbear expressing his Submission in some such manner too, saying, *Behold the Servant of the Lord! be it unto me according to thy Will*. For he consider'd him to whom he had thus promis'd Duty and Obedience, as an *Angel* of the Lord. This was plainly his Sense, and almost his very Words, though not found in the same place. And being exceeding fearful moreover of his own Frailty, he earnestly pray'd that God would graciously preserve in him

the

same Good Will to the End, and increase in him his Grace day by day, that he might live up perfectly to the *Profession* he had made. God heard his Prayer : nevertheless it was his pleasure that he should be thoroughly proved.

§. XXIII. The *Rule* of this Order of Reform'd Canons into which he now enter'd, was written by that great Light of the Church St. *Augustin*, and is extant in his Works : Whereof I shall only here tell the Reader, that the main Foundation of it, is no other than the *Love of God*, and next to that the *Love of our Neighbour* ; whence it begins with these very Words, *Before all things, my dearest Brethren, let GOD be loved, and in the next place our Neighbour ; for as much as these are the Principal Commandments given us.* And this excellent Rule, being but short, was read over once every Week by him after that he was profess'd, in order to make the Impression thereof more deep and constant upon his Mind, according to the Counsel of this Holy Father. Besides which Rule, there were likewise the (a) *Conclusions* of their Founder, which were recommended indeed by him, but not held Obligatory by way of *Vow*, and the *Dicta Seniorum*, or Sayings of the Elders, whereof the Reader will find here a pretty good Collection in the second Book, from the fifth to the nineteenth Chapter, they being also of the same Nature. For some of the first Years of his being in this place, and even after his *Profession*, he underwent hence great Desertions, Temptations, Aridities, and considerable Pains ; which are related by the Author of the Continuation of his Chronicle of Mount St. *Agnes* : And will be found here described in the 3d, 4th, and 5th Chapters of the IVth Book, in the Person of *Theophilus*. Notwithstanding which, he persisted earnestly in the Exercises of his Calling : And what he had receiv'd from *Florentius*, and the Seniors of this Pious Society, when at *Deventer*, he in this time digested, for the use of others, as well as of himself. For he himself tells us, how it was a Custom there for the more devout Clerks, to take (b) Minutes at

(a) *Conclusa & Proposita, sed non Vota, in nomine Domini, à Magistro Gerardo edita.*

(b) *Quidam ex ipsis verba Viri Dei, in tabulis signabant, &c. Vir. Flor. c. 23. Quidam devoti Verba ab ipso dicto scripserunt in tabulis & libellis. Chron. Mont. S. Agnet. c. 11.* the

the Conferences which this good Man frequently held, of all his choicest *Sayings*, and then, by way of *Repetition*, to discourse of them among themselves. And not a few of these are hence preserv'd by our Author distinct, besides those that are dispers'd in his Works, in an (b) *Appendix* to the Life of his dear Master and Father in Christ. Here, that I may use his own Words, *Silence* was his Friend, *Labour* his Companion, and *Prayer* his Auxiliary.

§. XXIV. By that time he arriv'd to the Age of Thirty, tho' he industriously laboured to conceal himself all that was possible, he began to be eminent. For in or about the Year MCCCCX there appear'd some Pieces abroad, whereof he was believed to be the Author, that were mightily read and approved. However, his Name was not prefixt by him to any of them (as far as I can find) either now or at any time afterward; so far was he from any Ambition in this Case, or Thoughts of acquiring a Reputation in the Church by what he had written. His manner generally was only at the end of the Books by him either composed, or copied, to subscribe his Name in the usual Form of the Copyists. And as for those which were undoubtedly of his own composing, as were his more publick Discourses and Sermons, which therefore it was no wise possible for him to conceal, he chose instead of his own Name to address them to those that had before heard them under the Appellation only of the *Poor Pilgrim*.

§. XXV. This † *Poor Pilgrim* then (for this was the Name wherein he delighted chiefly) persisted here in like manner as he had done at *Deventer*, in following the humble Steps of a Crucified Saviour; having bid defiance to the World, and to the God thereof. His Piety towards the True God, and *Jesus Christ*, his Obedience towards his Superiors, and his Charity and Brotherly Kindness towards his Collegues, did here very conspicuously shine forth. He
never

(b) *Quædam notabilia Verba D. Florentii Presbyteri.*

† In Imitation of his taking up the Name of Pauper Peregrinus, another Devout and Spiritual Writer seems not long after to have taken that of Desiderius Peregrinus in his *Thesaurus Animæ Christianæ*, translated from the Spanish into elegant Latin, and Printed at Rotterdam, A. 1674. in 16^o.

never in the least indulged himself in idleness, the Source and Parent of all evils, but was always exercising himself in reading good Books, or in transcribing them for a common Benefit, or else in composing new ones, according to the Occasions given him at sundry times, and the Measures of Light and Grace by God conferr'd on him. And whereas it was one of the principal Occupations of the Canon-Regulares of this Congregation to write the Bible, the Writings of the Fathers, and Treatises of Devotion; their Patron and Founder having written purposely on this very Subject to excite them; he not only apply'd himself earnestly to this Labour, to which he had been before accustomed, but animated others likewise mightily to it; of which there are extant no few * Proofs. And in acquitting himself of this Function, he practis'd the Counsel of one of the Ancients; for he fill'd himself in such wise with the Maxims and Truths contained in the Books which he copied, as he made himself capable of thereby instructing others, both by his Example and Doctrine, by word of Mouth, and by Writing; as he actually did in his Conversations, in his Discourses, in the Instructions which he gave to his Brethren, and in the Pieces of Piety which he here composed. Nay, so industrious and indefatigable he was, that he would frequently spend the greatest Part of the Nights in these Exercises and Studies, defrauding himself even of the necessary Refreshments and Repose, to the Injury of his bodily Health. There are to this present time said to be extant several Manuscript Volumes under his own Hand, and particularly a fair large Latin Bible in Four Volumes; with some Pieces of St. Bernard.

§. XXVI. In the Chappel the holy Reverence, and Presence of Mind which constantly appear'd in him was truly most edifying, but can hardly be expressed. And in the Discharge of all the Offices and Duties of social Devotion, he so acquitted himself, as even to fire the Souls of such as join'd with him therein. While he was singing of Psalms, he always us'd himself to stand with his Body erect, without ever leaning with his Elbows, or Back, that he might
ease

* *Doctrin. Juven. c. 4. & 7. Discip. Chruist. c. 6.*

ease himself at all : And as if he were in an holy [†] Rapture, his Face would be constantly lifted up, and fixed towards Heaven, as one that was ravish'd with the incredible Sweetness and Deliciousness of the *Psalms* ; which he professed to be much sweeter to his Palate than either Honey or the Honey-Comb. Nay at some times as he was chaunting them forth, they that were nearest to him thought him to be in an Extasie ; for his Countenance would seem to shine, as it were encompassed with Light and Glory ; and he would but just touch the Ground with the Tip of his Toes, the rest of his Body being ready as it were to fly away from the Earth into Heaven, where his Heart already was, and his Desires inseparably were fixed.

§. XXVII. Moreover he had such a high Veneration for the use of the *Lord's Prayer*, both in publick and in private, and so perfectly was convinc'd of the Divine Excellence of its Form, and of the most high Efficacy thereof, whenever taken up in Spirit and Truth, according to the Will and Design of our blessed Master, who has taught us so to pray to *his* and *our Father* ; as he would say, that it not only excell'd the Prayers of all Saints, but that it contained in it self effectually all the Prayers, Vows and Praises that ever had been made from the very Foundation of the World, and in particular all that are found either in the *Psalms* or in the *Prophets*, after an eminent manner. This he accounted a powerful Means under all Depressions, to lift up the Soul from Earth to Heaven, to make her ascend above the Angels, and to unite her with God.

§. XXVIII. But withal it must not be wondered at if the Darknes of the Times in which our Author liv'd had some Authority and Influence over him. The Jesuite who has given us his Life, extracted as he tells from several Authors, is pleas'd to insert a long Story of a Dream he had when

† *Dum psalleret vultu semper in Cælum sublato, sacro entusiasmo afflatus, dulcedine nimirum psalmorum incredibili captus, & extra se raptus advertebatur : Sic ut nonnunquam calcibus, non terra hereret infixus, sed summis duntaxat pedum digitis solum contingens reliquo corpore in cælo subvolare, ubi animo & desiderio agebat, meditaretur.* Franc. Tolensis Vit. Thomæ Kempisii, p. 13. & Hen. Rosweyd, vit. ejusd.

when he was but a young Student at the College, wherein the Virgin *Mary* seem'd to appear to him in much Majesty, careſſing the reſt of the young Scholars for their Devotion towards her, but giving poor *Thomas* a Reprimand for his Neglect of her. A Story it is which I can find not ſo much as the leaſt Footſteps of, either in *Badius* or *Tolenſis*, who had both for certain much better opportunity to have been acquainted with the Truth hereof, had it been ſo, than he who liv'd ſo long after them; eſpecially the latter, being of the ſame Order, and one who had taken pains likewise to ſearch into all what had been deliver'd concerning him by any of their Elders, or Ancient Brethren. And had it been credited within the firſt Hundred Years after his Death, there can hardly be any doubt but that this Author would have taken notice of it in writing his Life. For either he had heard of it, or he had not. If he had not heard of it, if they of his own College and Order had not then heard of it, if nothing of it ſo far as appears was to be met with either in their Records, or in any of their (or others) Writings, before the Year MD-LXXI, at leaſt; as from his total Silence is moſt probable; then I aſk how came it firſt to be reported, and then believed, as if it were a true and heavenly Revelation? But if it was then already reported, and he had ſome way or other come to the knowledge of it, thence is the Difficulty ſtill greater, rather than leſs. Since if he had any wiſe heard of it, he muſt have look'd upon it as Fabulous, or Frivolous; or at beſt as doubtful. This is plain from the Concluſion of his Life, wherein he teſtifies his Care in bringing into it only (a) what he had found to be Certain. And were it not ſo, no other Reaſon can be produc'd why it ſhould be omitted by him. The Account is indeed very formally dress'd up, and circumſtantiually ſet off, for the Advantage of a Practice in the Church of

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Rome,

(a) *Quæ veterum ſcriptis eruta, explorata & certa, de Thoma habemus. Ejusd. Vit. Th. Kemp. p. 15. De imitando Chriſto commendandisq; mundi vanitatibus, Lib. 4. Authore Thoma Kempiſio, ex latino latinores facti. Ant. 1575.*

Rome, which even the (a) Sober among themselves seem ashamed of. But as the Relater has not told us of his Vouchers, and there be these obvious Objections, besides some others that I insist not on, against the truth of the Fact; I think we must be of a very large Faith indeed to lay any Stress upon a Report of such a Nature, that was never so much as heard of till above an Hundred and Fifty Years after the Persons Death of whom it is told. And yet upon the Authority hereof, we find our Author pictured kneeling before the Virgin *Mary* with a Rosary in his Hands! When yet there is not one Word in that whole Book whereto the Effigies of him is ordinarily prefix'd, that can countenance this; nor one Reason why an Author of that *high Class* in the School of Christ, should be thus represented as needing the help of *Images* and *Beads*, which are call'd generally the *Books of the Unlearn'd*, for the assistance of his Memory, or for the quickening of his Imagination; and that even before a Treatise, the very Title and Subject of one Part of which, is the (b) *drawing* of the Soul off from the *Externals to the Internals*. I commend however the Diligence of this Learned Jesuite, and his great Industry in vindicating our Author; but herein I praise him not: yet neither do I altogether condemn him, as if in this Matter the Fraud were his, for it might very well be from some other, and in less than half that time there might be Traditionary Stories enough of that kind. 'Tis more than probable that there were some such which *Tolensis* heard and examin'd, and having done that rejected; for which he is to be esteem'd. This may be thought more than enough concerning that Vision of the Blessed Virgin which is pretended, and that which is design'd to be infer'd from it. Wherefore in one word, as I accuse not the Writer of Insincerity, so I cannot excuse him from Credulity. And after all, whatever Authority he might have

(a) In France more especially. Hence the wholesome Advice to the indiscreet Worshipers of the Blessed Virgin *Mary* by a wise and Pious Prelate of the Gallician Church; with the mollifying Interpretations of *Veron*, the Bishop of *Meaux*, and others.

(b) *Admonitiones ad Interna trahentes*, Lib. 2.

have for such an Account, which at most was but a (a) Dream, there is another Passage which he relates, that is I think no less observable, and seems not so perfectly well to suit with it. And this is, how that he once believed as he lay musing on his Bed (between sleeping and waking) he saw the Devil personally appear to him in a very hideous Form, whereupon he attempted to drive him away (as he had been taught) by repeating over the Angelical Salutation: At which the Evil Spirit was but still the more enrag'd, and approach'd the Bed nearer and nearer where he was lying, as it were to take him away; till coming to the end of it, when *Our Lord JESUS CHRIST* was pronounc'd by him aloud, the Devil (as Thunderstruck with so terrifying a Name) could then stay no longer, but was constrain'd to flee apace. Now therefore seeing that Satan was not able to stand before the Power of so great a Name, he began hereat to have somewhat more Boldness: and putting his Head out of the Bed, repeated many times together that most Blessed Name *JESUS CHRIST*; thereby pursuing the Fugitive Enemy. Who, the more strongly that he cries out calling upon *JESUS*, fled the more precipitantly away. Which when the good Man observ'd, giving thanks presently to God, he said within himself, 'If by this most holy Name of *JESUS*, I can so easily baffle and discomfit the Powers of Hell; from this time forth will I not, as hitherto I have been, be fearful of the Plots of the Evil Spirits, or waver in my Faith, let them rage never so much against me, and threaten my Ruin. By which it appears pretty evidently, whatever this Transaction might be, that his sole Refuge and Help was placed in the Name of *JESUS*, and in no other whatsoever. He clearly tells us moreover, that every Creature without Exception is to be consider'd as a *Poor Beggar*, and God in *Christ* is only that *Rich Person*, who is both willing and able to help every one according to all their Necessities.

s. XXIX. It is certain also from abundance of Places in his Writings, that he was no great Friend to the Court

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of

(a) *Visia nocturna. Rosweyd. ib.*

of *Rome*; that he was an hearty Lover of the Simplicity of the Gospel of *Christ*; and that he could in no wise be reconciled to that Ambition and Covetousness, which did so generally predominate then both among the Clergy and the Monasticks, and did in his Judgment corrupt the very Vitals of Religion. He was a Lover of Decency in the Adorning of material Churches, but seems not to be very well pleased with the extravagant Amassing of useless Riches there. He was against any ones quitting the World (as it was term'd) to go into a Monastery out of complaisance or obedience to Friends, or upon a natural Inclination or Disgust; or for outward Convenience, or the like: He thought every one was obliged throughly to examine their Call; and not so much to give heed to their first Fervors, as by a long Trial to prove their Sutableness for such or such a State. And notwithstanding he was himself a mighty Lover of Solitude and Silence, he seems yet to prefer the mixt State of Life before the Recluse: And therefore chose rather to live in a Community of Regular and Reformed Canons, than to go into a Monastery. He was a great admirer of St. *Austin*, whom he look'd on as his Father, and not a little exercised in the best of the Spiritual and Practical Writers; whose Principles he greedily imbib'd. Now this seems to have been his Method, that in reading and transcribing the devout Pieces of that Father, and of some few others, he would collect and digest such Sentences out of them, as did principally affect, and order them for his own use under such and such Heads, as a sort of Memorandums, or Common Places. Herein he imitated the Master of the Sentences, *Peter Lombard*, whose Divinity then only prevail'd in the Schools; but apply'd all to the practical and devotional Part, as very much disliking that contentious Learning which was then sprung up; and especially the Niceties and Subtilties of the Schoolmen about the Trinity, and the unsearchable Mysteries and Depths of Divine Wisdom. For he accounted of no Learning or Knowledge any otherwise, than as it is tended to inform and meliorate the Soul, by transforming it from Darkness into Light, and making it partaker of the Heavenly Nature in *Christ*.

§. XXX. All his Discourse was concerning God, and the Holy Scriptures, which were his continual Meditation. And as often as News or worldly Affairs were discoursed of before him, it has been observed that he would sit by as one that was dumb, and not open his Mouth. Nay, as if he were wholly ignorant of all those Matters which People had been talking about, it was difficult to get an Answer out of him when ask'd, unless he was allured to it by the Prospect of Good, and the Edification of his Brother. He had so slight a Value for the World, and all that is therein, that he did not so much as care to learn the common Names of many Things, and their use; as thinking them not at all to appertain to him. But if the Discourse were of Christ and Heavenly Matters, then being desired to declare his Sense, he spake as from a most clear everflowing Spring within him. And when for the Spiritual Benefit of some Persons who took great Delight in hearing him, he was solicited to make an extemporary Discourse or Exhortation to them, he never refused so to do; only taking a little while for inward Recollection and Meditation; or else for Sleep, in case of being overtired before. And he grew so famous for his most easy, and also most powerful way of Delivering himself on all Occasions, whensoever he was desired, suitably to the States of those he had to deal with; as great Numbers flock'd to him, not only out of the Neighbourhood, but out of the Towns and Villages lying round at a great Distance. These excited by the Fame of his Piety and Powerfulness of his Ministry, came in Crowds to *St. Agnes's Mount*, that they might receive from his Mouth that Instruction which they wanted, and so much long'd for; and might be thoroughly establish'd in the Word and Work of God.

§. XXXI. He was of such an affable and obliging Conversation, as he was extreamly beloved by all that were of the same House and Fellowship; and was chosen much against his own Will, Vice-President, while he was yet but young. This was done by general Consent, his Seniors freely yielding to him, and preferring him to themselves for his undoubted Capacity to discharge an Office, in which so great Prudence and Experience were of necessity requir'd. After this he was chosen also Burfar, or Treasur-

rer; they having not only a good Opinion of him for his Charitableness, but also for his wise Distribution of all that was entrusted with him. But, because the diligent Discharge of this place did too much take him off from Contemplation, and writing of pious Books, therefore he was eas'd of this, and restor'd to his former Station.

§. XXXII. Now it did often fall out, that as he was conversing with some of his Collegues, and conferring with them, he would manifestly perceive God calling to him from within by his Holy Spirit, and speaking to his Heart: Whence modestly begging leave of the Company, as if some body waited to speak with him, he would stait withdraw into his Bed-Chamber, or Oratory. Where pouring out his Heart before the Lord, he drew in that Heavenly Wisdom, which in his Golden Remains is by Persons of Piety so universally admir'd: And is most probably supposed to have had that Divine Conversation; which is found in part describ'd both in the Third Book of the former (according to its true Title *De Interna Locutione*) and in the III^d and IVth Books of this present Volume.

XXXIII. He was much delighted with this Motto, viz. *I sought for rest, but found it not, except in little Corners and in little Books.* The Dutch was, **In Boeckens and Boeckens**; or sometimes, **In een Boecken met een Boecken**; that is, *in one little Corner with one little Book*; as still somewhat more expressive than the former. He had it frequently in his Mouth, and he writ it in most or all his Books, as meaning thereby to declare, where and how the true Rest of the Soul is to be obtain'd: Not from any borrow'd Notion of others, but from his own most true, certain, and faithful Experience. Which convinced him that it was not to be found in the World, but in Retirement; not in great, but in small things; not in many and large Volumes, but in a few and little Books; and not in much Reading, but in much Recollection of the Spirit, and Self-Entertainment. There was accordingly a rough Pourtrait or Picture of this Venerable Man, done either by himself, or by one of his Contemporaries, with this Inscription, which an hundred Years after his Decease, was still kept in the same House where he had liv'd, tho' very much
then

then defaced, which I find was (a) shew'd as a devout Curiosity to such as visited the place. Thus then to apply to him his own Words, (b) "His Inclosure was made "to him as Paradise, and the Church [or Choir] as Heaven, while the Word of God was his Food, and the "Bread of Angels his hidden *Manna* to feed upon.

§. XXXIV. Concerning the Books which have been written by him, there have been a great many Disputes. And several Treatises have been written on one side and the other, onely about one of them; namely, that of the *Imitation of Christ*; which some contend not to be written by him, but either by the famous Chancellor of *Paris Gerson*, or else by one Abbot *Gersen*, a *Savoyard*. But the most have been written for this latter, as most were interested to maintain it to be his. Some think there are not wanting Pretensions of several others too, which may deserve to be compar'd with those for any of the said Three. Some again will have the first three Books to have been written by one of these, and the Fourth by another. And it is the Opinion of some that have curiously search'd into the ancient Copies, that only the first Book of that Treatise ought properly to bear the Name of the *Imitation of Christ*; the other Books being found under different Titles in several Manuscripts. Yea the very Learned Mr. *Dodwell* is of Opinion, that This at first was only the Title of the first Chapter of the first Book; which came afterwards to be mistaken for the General Title, by the Neglect of the Scribe; who designing, as was usual, to add the Title of the Treatise fairly *illuminated* and colour'd after all should be finish'd, might hence happen by some Accident or other to omit it, leaving only room to be afterwards fill'd up; and so through this Omission the next Transcriber, not knowing how to supply what was wanting, might leave no room, but place the *Particular* Title up higher, as if it were the *General* one, not confin'd to any Part or Chapter, but comprehending the Whole of all the Parts. And this Conjecture of this Learned Man, is farther also confirm'd

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from

(a) *Ostenditur adhuc ejus Effigies, sed admodum deformata, neque oblitterata, cum hoc insigni symbolo: In omnibus requiem, &c. Tolans. Vit. Kemp.*

(b) *De Discipl. Clausur. Lib. 5. c. 15.*

from the (*a*) second and (*b*) third Books, or Parts of the same Treatise ; as to which it appears that in several Manuscripts, the Particular Titles to the first Chapters in both have been in like manner advanc'd, and taken for more General ones ; while the said Chapters are left without so much as any. Howsoever yet it may be as to the Number, Order and Disposition of these Books, which must needs be confessed to be very intricate ; there are pretty evident Signs and Marks, that the Author of one cannot but be the Author (or at least the Compiler) of the rest, as also of those Tracts now brought forth in *English*, after having lain as it were buried a long time ; and digested into another Volume under the same General Title, by the same Right as the former was. The common Suffrage of the Manuscripts, as well as of the Prints, carries it generally for our Author ; which is farther favour'd by an original Manuscript written with his own Hand. But on the contrary, there are Difficulties in a manner inextricable on the other side. For besides that the Subscription at the end of the said Treatise doth not argue, say they, our *Thomas* to be so much the Author, as the Transcriber of the Book ; and that Cardinal *Bonaventure* quotes part of a Chapter of the first Book *verbatim* ; and says that they were the Words of a certain devout Book of the *Imitation of Christ* : There is said to be preserv'd in the Monastery of Mount St. *Gerards* (*Gerardi Montense*) a Manuscript without the Author's Name, before the Year MCCCC. and another that is yet more ancient, in that of *Arone*, before which there is prefix'd the Name of *Gersen*, whom they make to have flourish'd betwixt the Years MCCXXX and MCCXLV. And moreover the *Curators*, say they, of the *Venetian* Edition MDI. when they prefix'd the Name of *Abbot John*, do appeal to the Original of the Author's own Handwriting. This latter Difficulty, if it be really so, cannot be overcome. But the former, the Friends of the Author, have quite enervated ; evincing, that the above-mention'd Collations or Conferences, are falsely ascrib'd to *Bonaventure* ; and that for this very Reason, that *Ubertinus de Casalís*, who is later than *Bonaventure*, is found cited in

(*a*) *De interna Conversatione.*

(*b*) *De interna Christi Locutione.*

in them ; *Ubertinus* not being noted till about MCCCXX, whereas *Bonaventure* died almost Fifty Years before. This was first started in *Spain*, and *Don Pedro Manriquez* was the first that maintain'd, in the beginning of the last Century, that à *Kempis* could not be the Author ; because the said Book was cited by this Writer before à *Kempis* was born. Hence presently after sprung up that great Controversie betwixt the *Benedictins* and the *Canon-Regulars*, that each might have the Honour and Merit of such a Book ascrib'd to their Order. Now since there is perhaps no Book in the World, the Author of which has been more contested, or about which such a Number of Books have been written, the Reader I hope will not altogether lose his Pains to find here a short Summary of the several Pretensions that have been made to it, beginning with *St. Bernard*, and so descending to à *Kempis*. This is not so dry a Subject, but it may afford some useful Reflexions, which every one, by attending to the Characters of the Persons, will be able for himself to make.

§. XXXIV. *St. Bernard* seems to have been the Person that was in the first Possession of it, at least it was under his Name, says a Learned Critick, that the first Edition which we have of the Treatise of the *Imitation of Christ*, Printed at *Bresse* in the Year MCCCCLXXXV, did appear ; which was doubtless from a Manuscript older than that Date. And it was also under his Name, that the very first Translation of it into *French* was made ; for in the Inventory of *John Count of Angouleme and Perigueux* drawn up in 1467, which is kept in the Chamber of Accounts of *Paris* under this Title, *Inventaire des Livres trouvez en l'Armoire de son Monseigneur, le 1 jour de Janvier l'an 1467* ; there is found at the end, *La Imitation de S. Bernard, avec plusieurs Oraisons & Devotions en Papier & Lettre commune & bien caduque* ; i. e. *The Imitation of St. Bernard*, with several Prayers and Devotions in common Paper and Letter somewhat faded. Which makes it appear plainly that Manuscript was old in the Year 1467 ; and consequently, that it had been a long while that this Version had been made from a Manuscript bearing the Name of *St. Bernard* : Wherefore in the first *French* Edition of the *Imitation*, which was at *Paris* MCCCXCIII, it is remarkable, that till then this Book had been general-

ly (at least in *France*) attributed to St. Bernard, or to Gerson. The Title of which runs thus; *Here begins the most salutary Book, intitl'd, De Imitatione Jesu Christi, which hath been by him [jusque a present] even to this present Day, attributed to St. Bernard, or else to Dr. John Gerson.* And in another Edition set forth at *Paris* in or about the Year MD, the Title is, *The Book of the Imitation of our Lord, attributed to St. Bernard, or to John Gerson, translated from Latin into French.* Besides which there are said to be several Manuscripts extant to this Day, wherein the same is attributed to St. Bernard, particularly one in the Library of St. Genievieve M. num. 413, mention'd by * Mr. Ellies du Pin, which is judg'd to be betwixt two and three hundred Years old. And in the Register of the Monastery of *Melice*, there is mention also made of a Manuscript Volume, in which, after the first Book of the Imitation, follows St. Bernard's Meditation on the Passion. Nay, in a Manuscript bearing the most antient Date of all that are known, one Book thereof is joined with a Piece that is undoubtedly St. Bernard's. Notwithstanding which, that Author says, it is impossible to maintain that it is of St. Bernard: and the Book it self gives us, he thinks, a demonstrative Proof that it is not his; for in the 50th Chapter of the III^d. Book, there are these Words about the end, *Humilis S. Franciscus.* Now St. Bernard died in the Year MCLIII, and St. Francis was not born but in MCCXXVI. This, if it were to, is indeed a Demonstration sufficient. But to this it is replied, that the Name of St. Francis is not found in some Manuscripts, but only *Sanctus quidam*, a certain Saint, or Holy Person; and that probably the Name of St. Francis might be first set in the Margent, and might thence creep into the Text: That the Maxim indeed there cited, is by *Bonaventure* ascribed to St. Francis; but that this is no more than a single Conjecture, groundod upon the saying of *Bonaventure*, which may as well belong to some others as to him, being an ordinary Maxim which St. Francis or any other might have taken up: The Maxim refer'd to is this; *Man is as much as he appears in thy Eyes, Lord, and no more:* Which it would not be hard to parallel both in St. Bernard himself, and

* *Dissertation sur l'Auteur de l'Imitation de J. C.*

and in St. *Austin* ; which last might herein be referr'd to by the former without naming him. And Monf. *Andry* in the Year MDCXCII. having a new Version of this Treatise, according to its Original, from an antient *Gothic* Copy then newly found, takes exprefs Notice, that in the said old *Gothic* it was, *comme dit quelque Sainte Personne* ; and remarks that antiently to exprefs a Saint, they us'd to say, *Sainte Personne* instead of *un Saint*. But besides, it will be readily allow'd of St. *Bernard*, that such a Work of his might be touch'd over again, either by *Gerson* or à *Kempis*, or some other, whence it might come afterward to pass under their Names: And thus, say they, it was first ascrib'd to *Gerson*, and after him to à *Kempis*. Whence in the old Edition of *Brescia*, mention is made of its having been attributed to the former, not the latter ; as being supposed to be Printed from a Manuscript of a more antient date, than any bearing his Name as Author ; and the Claim of *Gerson* as the only known Claimant besides, being rejected, it is vindicated to St. *Bernard* as the True and Genuine Author.

§.XXXVI. *Landulph* or *Ludolph* of *Saxony* the Carthusian, is another Competitor for the Honour of this Book. There is a Manuscript of it under his Name, and it has been once printed as his. He writ *the Life of Christ*, which was first printed at *Strasburg*, A. MCCCCLXXXIII. where he had been Prior of the Charter-House, about an hundred and fifty Years before, being digested out of the four Evangelists, and other Ecclesiastical Writers, with Commentaries and Prayers to each Chapter. This was had in particular Esteem by the Regular Canons, and Friends of T. à *Kempis*, and possibly so much the more as he was too Originally of the Diocess of *Cologne*, where his Manuscripts were preserv'd. And as the Style of these two Writers is somewhat like, and the same Persons that had a Veneration for one, had generally so for the other ; hence their Books might be confounded together, and one taken for the others. And thus it is probable, that *the Life of Christ*, which did really appertain to *Landulph*, came to be printed at *Cologne* under the Name of à *Kempis* ; as *the Imitation of a Kempis* under that of *Landulph*. There is also an antient *French* Version of it found under the same Name. The conformity moreover of Stile, and of Thoughts of the Book of *Imitation*, with what is undoubtedly

doubtedly of this *Landulph* has been by some taken Notice of. But the Authorities to support this are but slender, and the Conformity not greater than what may be elsewhere met with.

§. XXXVII. A third Competitor brought in by the Author of the *Conjectura*, printed at *Rome*, A. 1667, is *Ubertinus de Casalis*: But it is not so much as pretended that this *Ubertinus* wrote all the four Books, but only some part of them. He liv'd in the beginning of the XIVth Century, and was the chief of those that were call'd *Spiritualists*: He wrote a Book of the *Crucified Life*, and another of the *Seven States of the Church*, which were both printed at *Venice*. He was indeed considerable in his time, being consulted by Persons of the highest Eminence in the Church; and his Maxims seem to have been very agreeable with those of *the Imitation*: And a great deal of what the *Benedictins* bring in favour of *Gersen*, will quite (as well if not better) agree to this *Ubertinus*. He was yet suspected of Heresie, and accus'd by some of the Friars both at the Council of *Vienna* and at *Rome*. And, fearing, as it is said, the Storm that was coming upon him, he chose to quit his Order, after he had been refus'd leave to retire with his Followers. Some of these protested against the Pope's usurp'd Authority, and went even so far as to call him the Mystical Antichrist, or the fore-runner of Antichrist.

§. XXXVIII. The fourth is *Peter Rainaluzzi* of *Corbario*, a Dominican Friar, and Apostolick Penitentiary at *Rome*, contemporary with the former, who had the Reputation of great Sanctity; and by the Interest of *Lewis* of *Bavaria*, was made Pope (in opposition to *John XXII.* whom the Emperor had formally depos'd) under the Name of *Nicholas* the Vth. but being afterward deserted, and then betray'd by Count *Boniface*, and carry'd to *Avignon*; he there submitted himself, and liv'd and dy'd very Penitent three Years after. In which time he is suppos'd, according to the *Roman Conjecturer*, to have written the three first Books of *the Imitation*: For, as for the fourth, his Determination is, that *Gerson* did undoubtedly write the same; and that all four were afterwards compil'd together, Revis'd, and Digested by our *à Kempis*, in that Form which they are at present found in. In casting up indeed of the Evidence, after his having weigh'd

weigh'd the several Reasons and Authorities on each side, this Author a little demurs, which of these Three have the better Title, *Ubertin of Casal*, *Gersen of Vercelli*, or *Peter of Corbario*; but is chiefly inclin'd to the latter, for which he brings the Testimony of one *Marianus a Florentine*, whom he will have to have flourish'd near the beginning of the XVth Century. But his Arguments were refuted by † *Papebrochius*, who shews *Marianus* to have been an hundred Years later.

§. XXXIX. The next Competitor is Pope *Innocent III.* who wrote indeed (before he was Pope) Three Books of the Contempt of the World; which may have been taken by some for the Three first Books of the Imitation, which are found under that very Title: As also being in some Collections by the Transcribers put together, the Reader might thence consider them both as of the same Author; and accordingly they have been both Printed together, as particularly in the Edition of *Lions*, 1570. 12.

§. XL. The sixth is *John de Canabaco*, or *Canabacco*, whose Title is founded upon a Manuscript without date, but suppos'd as old as *T. à Kempis*, which Cardinal *Bisclii* brought out of *Germany* to *Rome*; which contained the Works of *Nicholas Inghelsspuel* Rector of the University of *Vienna*; and *John de Tambach* Regent of the University of *Prague*, with the Four Books of the Imitation, under the Name of this *John de Canabaco*; for the Title is, *Incipit Tractatus Johannis de Canabaco, de Imitatione Christi, & contemptu omnium vanitatum Mundi, & dividitur in quatuor Libros: i. e.* Here begins the Treatise of *John de Canabaco* of the Imitation of Christ, and of the Contempt of all the Vanities of the World, which is divided into Four Books. In the same Manuscript there is a Bull dated at *Vienna* in MCCCCX-LVIII, and written in the same Hand as the Imitation. The Benedictins would have *J. de Canabaco* to be the same with their pretended *Gersen*; but their Proofs are not at all Conclusive. There are fundry Opinions of the Criticks who this should be, all History being silent of such an one; and after all their Disquisitions, it is as much or more in the dark than at first. But it seems most probable that this

this *John* was really no other than *Johannes de Tambaco* or *Tanabaco* (for the more soft Pronunciation after the *Italian* manner when he was at *Rome*) that was Rector of the University of *Prague*, and in MCCCLXVI, Master of the Palace to *Urban V.* So this is a real not imaginary Person; who writ besides the Consolation of Divinity, or the Mirror of Wisdom, finish'd 1389, which has had several Editions at *Paris*, *Cologne* and *Nuremberg*; also a Treatise of Nature and Grace, and the Delights of Paradise, with some Sermons. Nor are there any Manuscripts yet produced, after the search made in all the Libraries of *Europe*, which can pretend to a greater Antiquity, than what may very well agree with this Age; who died in the XVth Century, Aged above fourscore. As there is also nothing in the disputed Book it self, which may not suit with his Character, if it were well examin'd. It doth not therefore appear, that any other besides him can be here meant, any more than there is such a Place as *Canabaco*, or any thing like it to be found in the *Piemontese*. And that he alone is here really meant, is from the following Considerations farther confirm'd. 1. This Manuscript was brought out of *Germany*, near the place where this Author is known to have flourish'd. 2. It is in the same Volume immediately subjoin'd to the undoubted Works of this *John de Tambaco*; and the whole Volume seems but as a Collection of the Writings of those two Contemporary Regents of *Prague* and *Vienna*. 3. That he was a Person eminent for Piety, and a diligent reader of God's Word, a Zealous and Powerful Preacher, and one that reform'd also diverse Abuses of that Corrupt Court, in which he for some while liv'd. 4. That in his Sermons and Writings, the Seeds of a most necessary Reformation according to the Life of Christ, and of his Apostles, were sown by him in the University of *Prague*. 5. That during the Life of our *Kempis*, this was publish'd together with his Works. And, 6. that Dr. *Leiderdam* might very well, when he studied at *Prague*, receive the said Treatise immediately from the Hand of Dr. *Van Tambach* [*De Tambaco*] if he were the Author, and might bring it with him to *Deventer*; and thence à *Kempis* could not but easily receive it, and so might taanscribe it for the use of the Society, or for his own

own Edification. -As for the *Italian* Termination, and the mistake of a C for a T, they would be of little Consideration, were but the Allegations in his Favour otherwise considerable enough.

§ XLI. The seventh is *John Gersen*, alias *Gerssem*, alias *Gessen*, alias *Gesen*, alias *Gers*, (for after so many different ways is his Name written) said to be Abböt of a Benedictin Monastery at *Vercelli*, and to have flourish'd in the XIIIth Century, whose Right is founded partly in the Title of the former, that is, of *John de Tanabaco*, and partly on some *Italian* Manuscripts; upon the Authority of which it was Printed at *Rome* under this Abbots Name, by a certain † *Sicilian* Abbot of the same Order, a Man of good Parts and Learning, but extreemly bigotted. The Benedictin Monks finding the Honour of their Order concern'd in it, have written abundance of Books in vindication of his Right; and when Cardinal *Richelieu* was about to Re-print this Book at the *Louvre*, with a design of prefixing to it the Name of *Tho. à Kempis*, the Benedictins of *France* presently interposed, and petitioned him to put the Name of *John Gersen* to it, maintaining that they had four Manuscripts of this Book at *Rome* which bear his Name. He granted them what they ask'd conditionally that this should be well prov'd and aver'd by Persons of Probity and Skill. *Richelieu* writ hereupon to Cardinal *Bagni*, who caus'd the said four Manuscripts to be brought to him, and to be nicely examin'd in his Presence. But tho' the determination was no way favourable for the Benedictins, this was so far from putting an end to the Dispute, that it seem'd but to heighten it. *Naudens*, Secretary to the Cardinal, gave a relation of this whole Transaction

† Magni & Venerabilis Servi Dei, Johannis Gersen Abbatis Italo-Benedictini de Imitatione Christi, Libri Quatuor plane Divini. Nunc denuo ad fidem per antiquorum M.SS. Codd. recensiti, & aucti, atque Apologetico Libello illustrati à D. Constantino Cajetano. Siculo, Syracusano, Casinensi Abbati, Presidente Apostolici Collegii Gregoriani, Domus S. Benedicti de propaganda Fide, eodemq; Consultore Sacrae ipsius Congregationis. Ad sanctiss. D. N. Innocentium Papam X. Roma A. C. 1644. Ex Typogr. Officina S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide in 8^o. superiorum Auctoritate.

action in which he was principally concern'd, in a Letter to *Messieurs de Puy*, which * *Fronteau* Printed in his Edition of the Imitation; the which was by two Benedictin Monks, *Walgrave* and *Quatremaires* smartly oppos'd. And a Trial soon after commenc'd before the Lords of the Requests in the Court of Parliament upon this Matter, betwixt the Canons of St. *Genevieve* and the Benedictins of St. *Germans*; the former taking the part of *Naudæus*, who had been too indecently treated by these. This lasted a good while, and the Cause having been learnedly pleaded to on all sides, after no less than six Hearings a Prohibition was decreed by the Court against Printing the Imitation under the Name of Abbot *Gersen*; and a License granted to Print it under that of *T. à Kempis*. Yet neither was this Judgment sufficient to end the Quarrel, but they continued still writing on both sides as before. It is incredible what a vast number of Books have been written on a Dispute so very slight as this, because the Interest of two Religious Orders were so far engag'd in it, as neither could with Honour recede. It was in the Year MDCLI, that *Naudæus* Publish'd at *Paris* his *Bibliographia Kempensis*, in which he gives an account of all such as either by their Dissertations or Books, had in publick defended the Cause of *à Kempis* against the *Gersenists*; who appear'd as numerous as the others. Since which time above as many more have written as were then; and several Assemblies likewise of the most eminent Criticks of *France*, by a Commission from the Archbishop of *Paris*, have been held, to inquire afresh into this Affair, particularly in the Years MDCLXXI, MDCLXXIV, and MDCLXXXVII, of which the Accurate *du Pin* has given an Account; who has abridg'd more than forty Treatises written on this very Subject. And indeed there are a great many more; *Naudæus* alone having even in the Year MDCLIII, when he died, Publish'd in *French* and *Latin*, no fewer than ten of his own, besides several others recommended

* *Thomæ à Kempis de Imitatione Christi, Libri IV. cum editione Fraudis, qua nonnulli hoc opus Johanni Gersen Benedictino attribuerent Parisiis, ex Officina Commosiana, 1649, in 8°.*

mended by him to the Press with Prefaces, which were but Answers and Re-joinders to what the Friends of *Gersen* had Printed against him. Since whose Decease, the latter have met with more favourable Judges than before; the great Integrity as well as Learning of *Mabillon* being a good weight on their behalf: But the Cause however remains still undecided to this very day.

§ XLII. The eighth is *John Charliere de Gersen*, so called from the place of his Birth in the Diocess of *Rhemes*; an Author of as great Reputation, profound Learning and solid Piety, as any the Church had for several Ages together. And truly all the Manuscripts which are for *Gersen*, *Gessen*, &c. (one only excepted which bears the Title of Abbot) may be understood of *Gersen*, by the Corruption of his Name. There is no antient Author speaks any thing of this pretended Abbot *Gersen*. His Name was never so much as heard of before the Year MDCXIII, that is, about Four Hundred Years after he is supposed to have written; Abbot *Caetano* then began the Dispute about him, for the Honour of his Order; but not one Author could be produc'd for the Existence of any such one. The first of his being mention'd in History, was by *Fr. Augustino della Chiesa* in his *Chronicle of Piemont*; Printed A. MDCXLVIII, that is, above thirty Years after the Contest began: wherein he reckons him among the Abbots of *Vercelli*, and gives him the Honour of being the Author of *the Imitation*; and yet it is observ'd, that he makes no mention of him in his *History of Vercelli*. There is no proof at all that any such as *J. Gersen* was ever Abbot (as is pretended) of *St. Stephens of Vercelli*: There is none at all that he was a Native of *Canabaco*, or that by *Canabaco* is to be understood *Cavaglia*, or that *John of Vercelli*, and *John of Canabaco* are one individual Person. Nor does any one know who this *Gersen* should be, whose Name is found in the Manuscripts. There is not any one *MS.* that gives him the Title of Abbot, but that of *Arone*, where he is always call'd Abbot, but no notice is taken either of what Order, or what Place. So the Benedictins have no more Right, according to this, to challenge him for Theirs, even allowing him to be a real Author; then the Bernardines, or any other that have Ab-

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bies, as has been most truly observ'd by an able † Examiner of this whole Affair. And indeed both the Reasons and Authorities for *Gerson*, rather than *Gersen*, are so considerable, as were it not for disobliging so great a Body as the Benedictins, not to mention others, there is a strong Presumption it would have been decided in his Favour at the Assembly of MDCLXXXVII, or at least before this time. For it is alledg'd that he is a real Author, one who has compos'd Pieces of a like nature, and who was in actual Possession of it not only before this pretended Abbot, but even as soon, if not sooner than any other; that if the Title of *Abbot* (with the difference of a Letter) be found in one Manuscript, then is there of *Chancellor* in others, yea also *Chancellor of Paris*, which can possibly be attributed to no other but him; that his Name is found also actually written *Gersen*, with his Title of Professor of Divinity at *Paris*, in a certain famous Epitaph, and that too preserv'd by the Benedictins themselves: And that the common Vogue and Opinion was for him both in *France* and *Italy*, for the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries. He was born in 1363, sent to the University in 1377, admitted into the Theological Faculty in 1382, made Master of the College of *Navarre* in 1392, and shortly after Chancellor of *Paris*: In 1414 he was sent to the Council of *Constance*, as Ambassador from the King, and Deputy of the University. His Title was *Doctor Christianissimus*, or the most Christian Doctor: And a Spirit of Genuine Christianity runs thro' his Works; tho' having written much, all possibly may not be so correct and of a Piece. He did all that was possible to take away the Schism, and to restore Peace and Purity to the Church, by cutting off its Errors, and wiping away its Spots; and labour'd that the whole Christian World both in Head and Members might be Reformed. And so soon as he found that the Pope did withstand the wish'd for Reformation, he wrote that famous Treatise *De Ausurabilitate Papæ ab Ecclesia*, which was approv'd of by the Fathers of the Council: And so great was the Fame of his Learning and Piety, and such his Authority

† *Du Pin Nouv. Bibl. To. XII. p. 60. 78. Diss. sur l' Aut. §. VII. &c.*

rity in the said Council, that in all their Conferences and Sessions, he had the principal Place, and was unanimously chosen by them, to draw up the Decrees and Resolves of the Council. Also of such Reputation was his *Tripartite*, wherein he treated of the Decalogue, of Confession, and of the Art of Dying, that by the Command of no less than Seventeen Synods it was recommended to the Presbyters and Curates to be made use of in their Catechetical Lectures, their hearing of Confessions, and their Visitations of the Sick; and was transferred also into the Rituals and Offices of several Churches, which are particularly enumerated by Mr. *de Launoy*, in his Learned History of the College of *Navarre*. Who has written likewise on purpose to state this † Controversy, while the Suit was depending betwixt the Two Orders, and all the Criticks were generally engag'd for one or for the other of them: And notwithstanding he was carried to favour his Friends the Benedictins and their Pretensions, before the Congregation of St. *Maur* and theirs; has said a great deal that is more favourable for the Chancellor than for the Abbot, and taken away all at once the common Objection of the Gerseniſts, viz. That in the most antient MSS. there was the Quality of that Abbot affix'd to the Author, but that of Chancellor in none, by his own Attestation of what he had both seen and handled. For whom also Mr. *Du Pin* is a Witness too. * Mr. *Labbe* has done the same, or rather more, writing on purpose to defend the Title of *Gerson* to the *Imitation*; whose Observations hereupon are own'd to contain several curious Passages by competent and indifferent Judges. It is urg'd besides, that there are several Manuscripts of it under his Name, particularly that of St. *Germain des Prez*, and of *Stratzburg*, the one MCCCCLX, the other MCCCCLXIII, with an ancient Vellum Manuscript of *Lecheffier* without Date: Whereas the MS. of *Parma* is the first MS. with Date, which has the Name of *Gerson*, and that only before

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† *Joan. Launoyi Constantien. Parisiens. Theol. Dissertatio de Autore Lib. de Imitat. Christ. Paris. 1663. Ed. 4to.*

* *Observations de Charles Labbè pour la Restitution de Livre de Imitatione Christi, a son vrai autor Jean Gerson Chancelier, &c.*

fore the Fourth Book; it is dated MCCCCLXVI, which is Six Years at least after it was set forth under the others Name. Those of *Podalirione* and *Sluse* are undoubtedly later, and so acknowledg'd by two Assemblies of Criticks, otherwise favourable enough to the Cause of the Benedictins. That of *Arone* is indeed judg'd earlier, but was refused to be brought into *France* with other Manuscripts, while *Naudæus* was alive, tho' the Benedictins were not only by him challeng'd to it, but also invited by a Reward, and that even while their Cause was depending before the Lords of the Requests; and to whom they themselves too had remov'd it from an Inferior Court. Besides there are, say his Friends, about Twenty several Editions of this Book, which they reckon up, bearing his Name as Author, at *Venice*, *Milan*, *Lions*, *Rome* and *Vienna*; most of them ancient, and one so very ancient without Date of Year or Place, as is thought to have been at the first Invention of Printing, and by consequence in the Life time of à *Kempis*. Farther they endeavour to give an account how *Gerson* cameto write the Imitation, and tell us that the *Celestins* had made application to him, that he might write somewhat for their Instruction and Consolation on the Words of *Christ*: *If any Man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me*: Whereupon it is speciously suppos'd that he answer'd them with the Book, which begins, *He that followeth me*; because it appears from a Letter of his own to them, that he had accordingly satisfied their Request; and also that he after this compos'd another Treatise for them, upon these Words, *Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden*, with which the Fourth Book begins. For the Testimony of Authors also there is no want. So that *Launoy* boasts of more than an Hundred, and more considerable than those for any other; which yet the Benedictins would have to favour their Cause. And besides these Authorities, there are several Reasons which they bring to make it more probable as (1.) the comparing it with his Treatise of the Spiritual Life of the Soul, to the Bishop of *Cambray*, with his Considerations on Mystical Divinity, with his Book of the Purification of the Interior Senses; that of the Illumination of the Heart, or the one Pearl; that of Meditation, which is found some-

sometimes join'd with the *Imitation*; and that of Conformity with Christ, shewing how the Child JESUS may be Spiritually Conceive'd, Born, and Educated in every one of us; together with some others of a like sort. (2.) That the Author must have been bred up in some University, and have had a great Acquaintance with the Doctors and Canons of his time. (3.) That he must have liv'd under the Government of a King. (4.) That there is a manifest Conformity of Principles and Sentiments. And (5.) some agreeable Circumstances as to his External State and Relation in the World. This is the summ of the Plea for him. The curious Reader may here consult, if he please, the Elaborate Dissertation on this Controversy, which is prefixt before the last Edition of his Works at *Paris*, in four Volumes, *folio*, by the indefatigable and candid *Du Pin*, and his Life in his Ecclesiastical History. He died A. 1429 at *Lions*, and is there buried in *St. Paul's Church*, having these Words written on his Tomb, *Penitemini & Credite Evangelio*, [*i. e.* Repent, and believe the Gospel] which he frequently us'd in his Sermons and Discourses.

§. XLIII. The ninth Competitor is *John* (the Brother of *Thomas*) à *Kempis*, suppos'd to be call'd *John the Abbot*, by an easy mistake, from the Priory which he held in *Windesheim*. In favour of whom it's said, that the Author must have liv'd in that time, when the Apostolical manner of Life was renew'd, by divers Congregations or Fraternities set up; that he must have been a Canon Regular, or a *Devote*, not properly a Monk; that mention is made by some Writers of an elder à *Kempis*, the Disciple (not of *Florentius*, but) of *Gerard*, who instituted these Societies for the Renovation of the Apostolical Life and Spirit; that he was famous about the Year MCCCCX. but his Brother not till twenty or thirty Years afterward; that the most antient dated MSS. from 1421 to 1441, do conclude as much at least for him, as for *Gerson*, or *Gersen*; that the Seniors who reported to * *Trithemius*, that their Seniors had read this Book, did generally ascribe the same to the elder à *Kempis*;

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that

* *Trith. de illustrib. German. Viris. Mr. Andry Dissertation serv. au Pref. a la Consolation Interieure. Par. 1692. Du Molinet Avertissement des Chanoines Regulars de la Congregation de France, 1687.*

that the same *Trithemius*, without mentioning them to be Brethren, remarks, that it was believ'd there were two of the same Name, both of them Regulars, both Persons of good Sense, and both Authors of several Treatises of Piety; that the first of these was Converted in the time of the great *Gerard*, and enter'd into the Community by him establish'd, after *St. Austin's* Order, about ten Years at least before *Thomas* was sent to *Deventer*. All which can agree with none so well as with the eldest of these Brethren: And there is also extant an antient MS. in the Bodley Library, containing all the four Books of the *Imitation* compleat, which has the Name of *Johannes a Kempis* on the first Page. Nor are there any MSS. yet found so antient, which can witness that he could not be the Author; as concerning the younger Brother is much pretended. And farther that *Gerson's* Title doth not hold against his, there are some Reasons alledg'd worthy of Consideration, as that it is not put in the Catalogue of his Works, made by his Brother the *Celestin*, or in that of *Caresius*; that it is generally omitted in the Editions of his Works, and not only at *Cologne*, *Straßburg* and *Basil*, but even at *Paris* it self; that some of them have particularly excepted against it by Name; that the Character of his Person doth not agree at all with that of a Regular, which frequently herein occurs; and lastly, that there is a considerable difference in the Stile. As for any of the other *John's*, as the *Gessen* of *Caetano*, the *Gersen* of *Walgrave*, &c. while History is so wholly silent concerning them, their Competition cannot be thought any wise considerable. The confusion of the Manuscripts in this case; the evident Mistake of the Transcribers; the probability of putting an *e* for an *o*, either ignorantly, or rather designedly, in a Country where the Name of *Gerson* might not be, for some Reasons, so very acceptable, as in *Italy*; and some also, not ungrounded suspicions concerning the interpolation of the Author's Title and Quality, as well as Name, with the easy derivation of the Original (whether ignorant or wilful) Mistake through the MSS. of *Italy* from that of *Arone*, which appears to be the antientest, do all seem to make for this *John*, or for *Gerson*; and if the Title of the latter, for the Reasons aforesaid, can be fairly precluded against, there is none of all the *John's* who is able

to bring in a better Plea than *John a Kempis*, or even so good an one.

§. XLIV. The Reasons that are brought for the Right of the other Brother, are in short these, 1. The Conformity of Stile of this Work with the other Works of *Thomas a Kempis*, both in the use of certain uncommon and barbarous Terms, almost peculiar to him, frequent Interjections, the same manner of expressing himself, in low and simple, but very expressive and affecting Terms, and in the use of a short and sententious Stile, so that each Phrase is a Sentence and a Maxim. 2. The Conformity of Thoughts and Sentiments in this Book with the others, that are by all granted to be his. 3. The great multitude of *Flemish* or *Dutch* Expressions, which make it appear clearly the Author must have been no *Italian* or *Frenchman*. 4. The Doctrine and Maxims of the Canons Regular of the Congregation of *Gerard* the Great; which is a Proof that it must be one of his Disciples. This is evidenc'd by Proofs taken not only from those *Exercises* which are preserv'd by *a Kempis* in his Lives; but also by a considerable Letter of *Johan Van Huesden*, one of the first Priors of *Windesheim*, and a Friend of this *a Kempis*. 5. The Name of *Devotes*, which he very frequently gives to those Congregations, and Religious Societies, amongst whom he seems to place himself as a Member; which is that very Name that was commonly given to the Canons of this Congregation, as already has been hinted, and as is evident from the Lives of *Gerard* the Great, *Florentius*, and others, written by *a Kempis* himself; and from *Busch* in his Chronicle. It must however be acknowledg'd, that most of these Reasons make as much for one, as for the other Brother; but against the other Pretenders they seem conclusive. Now the Witnesses for his Title are, 1. *George Pirc-Kamer*, Prior of the *Carthusians* at *Nuremberg*, contemporary with our Author, who, in the beginning of MCCCCXCIV, writes a Letter to Mr. *Peter Danhausser*, to recommend the care of the Impression of this and the other Books of our Author. 2. *John Maubern*, Abbot of *Lions*, contemporary also with him, and his Friend, who having writ an History of the Church Writers of the Orders of the Canons Regular, places this our Author in the number of these, as for several devout Books by him compos'd, so par-

ticularly for that which begins, *Qui sequitur me*: and in his *Spiritual Rose Garden*, printed at Basil, A. MCCCCXCI, he expressly cites the *Imitation* under the Name of a *Kempis*.

3. John Kunne of Duderstat, who caus'd to be printed in the Year 1489, a Book of the Soul's Elevation to God, wherein he attributes the Book of the *Imitation* to him.

4. Peter Schot, Canon of Strasburg, in his Edition of Gerson's Works, wherein he remarks, that he had purposely omitted such Treatises which were sometimes attributed to Gerson, but which have another certain Author, as the Book *de Contemptu Mundi*, which it is manifest was set forth by one Thomas, a Canon Regular.

5. The Anonymous Coeval Author of his Life, who says, that what he spake to the Lord in his Solitude, is to be seen in his second Chapter of the Interior Conversation of Christ with the Soul.

6. Matthias Farinator, a Carmelite of Vienna, Author of a Book call'd, *The Light of the Soul*, printed at Antwerp, A. 1477, who is related to have writ the Book of the *Imitation*, with his own Hand, about the Year 1472, under the Name of a *Kempis*: But his Copy is not now to be found; tho' they say it was kept with other Treatises in the Library of Ausburg, as the Catalogue of the said Library doth testify.

7. The Chronicle of Windesheim is also for him: And Heferus has brought no less than a whole Century of Witneses for him; which he calls *Centumvirale Judicium*, or the Judgment of an hundred Men. Other Evidences and * Testimonies of a fresher date, are of Lucas Holstenius, of Leo Allatius, of Camillo di Capona, which the Roman Advocate Payen has publish'd; together with Bollandus, Petavius, Papebrochius, and a great many others who have a Name among the Learned, whom it would be tedious to produce. The last that has appear'd in his Cause, is Du Molinet, a Learned Antiquary of the Congregation of St. Genevieve; whose Modesty would not suffer him to publish what he had written hereupon; wherefore he sent but a few Copies of his Manuscript Dissertation, written in the Name of that Congregation, to the Benedictins of St. Germain des Prez and to some few others among the Learned. Which according to his Desire was kept private in

* Testimonium adv. Gersenistas triplex. Ab Ant. Franc. Payen. Advocato in curia Romana Celeberrimo. An. 1652. 8.

in Manuscript for twenty Years, till a Copy of it falling into the Hands of *Pere Simon*, as is thought, was by him publish'd in the first Tome of the *Bibliothèque Critique*, printed at *Paris* and *Amsterdam*, A. 1708. which is a very curious Piece; and brings the Controversy betwixt the two Orders to a short Issue.

§. XLV. But after all, there remains another, who has not yet been taken notice of, as I find, by any: And this is an *Englishman*, and an eminent Light of Religion in his day: I mean † *Walter Hilton*, a *Carthusian* Monk, and Doctor in Divinity, who liv'd in the *Charter-House* founded by King *Henry V.* that was call'd *Bethlehem*, of whose Birth and Death I can find nothing certain, but only that he flourish'd under his Successor *Henry VI.* As he was eminent for his Piety and Learning in general, so particularly for his continual Attention to, and high Advancement in, the contemplative Life. Besides, the *Scale of Christian Perfection*, deservedly valu'd by the most experienc'd Judges, he has writ a *Book of Spiritual Ascensions*, another of *Consolation in Temptations*, one of *Holy Living*, one of the *Idol of the Heart*, or *Spiritual Idolatry*, two of *Contemplation*, with several others which have not yet been publish'd, but lie buried up and down in Libraries. His Style is plain, after the manner of the *Imitation*, without any Affectation or Elevation; but his Thoughts are solid; and that he might also be the Author of this, was suggested to me by my very worthy Friend the Honourable *Charles Hatton*, Esq; from whom in confirmation hereof, I receiv'd the following Letter.

Dec. 2. 1706.

After a long Expectation, Sir, that the Book which I mention'd to you (concerning which you desir'd of me a farther Information) *Walter Hilton* his *Treatise de Musica Ecclesiastica*, might be found among the MSS. (for I never could learn that it ever appear'd in Print) in some Library either in *Oxford* or *Cambridge*; I am at last assur'd from my Correspondents there whom I had desir'd to make enquiry and search for it, that accordingly they had, but cou'd neither discover it, or gather any Information to encourage them to hope that they may. And therefore I shall not now longer defer acquainting you with

† *Pits. de Illust. Angl. Scriptor. ad an. 1433. n. 805. Bal. etiam.*

with the *Motives* which inclin'd me to say, that more probable *Reasons* might be produc'd, to incline any unbiass'd Person to suppose, that, most eminently Devout, and Learned Carthusian Frier (our Countryman) Walter Hilton, to have been the genuine Author of that justly Celebrated Pious Book de Imitatione Christi, which hath most generally been ascrib'd to Thomas à Kempis, than there is to suppose any one of those in whose behalf (in opposition to Thomas à Kempis) a Claim thereto was in the last Age set up; for there are irrefragable Exceptions against the probability of the Pretences made in their favour, as may appear in Dr. Cave's *Historia Literaria*, and much more fully in several Tracts on that subject, publish'd by the famed Gabriel Nau-dæus, Father Fronteau, and divers other Learned Men.

Nay, more colourable Pretences may be alledg'd in behalf of Walter Hilton, than have been produc'd in favour of Thomas à Kempis, whose Justification to be Author of the Book de Imitatione Christi depends chiefly on the Authority of a MS. thereof, in which it is not said that he is the Author, but only Finitus & Completus A.D. 1441. per manus Thomæ A Kemp. in Monte S. Agnet. prope Zwill, which might have been asserted, if he had only transcrib'd it. Now it is apparent out of Pitseus his *Relationes, Historicæ de Rebus Anglicis*, and from the Authority of other Authors, that Walter Hilton flourish'd before the date, of that MS. for he was famed for his eminent Piety and Learning, A.D. 1433. and 'tis to be observ'd, that the like strain of Devotion with that in the Book de Imitatione Christi, runs through his highly esteemed pious Treatise stil'd *Scala Christianæ Perfectionis*, of which Walter Hilton is undoubtedly the Author: and tho' that be the only Book I cou'd ever meet with Compos'd by him, yet Joan. Jacobus Frisius, in his *Epitome Bibliothecæ Gesnerianæ*, and our Countryman Pitseus (as undoubtedly Theodorus Petreius, and others who give an Account of the Carthusian Writers, tho' I have not seen any of them) do enumerate several other devout Books writ by him, and among them one stil'd, *de Musica Ecclesiastica*, which begins *Qui sequitur me non ambulat.*

Which having mention'd I must observe to you, that at the time when was most hotly debated the long and not yet determin'd Controversie betwixt the Canon-Regulars, who stoutly did and do stand up to maintain Thomas à Kempis (who had been of their Fraternity) his Title to the Book de Imitatione Christi, and the Bene-
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dictin-Monks, who pretend that there is extant an Authentick MS. of that Book, to which is annex'd (as being Author thereof) the Name of an Abbot who had been of their Order, one John Gersen or Gessen, who flourish'd betwixt the Years 1230. and 1245; and to justify their Pretence, they caus'd (about the middle of the last Century that MS. to be brought from Italy to Paris, as likewise another (farther to invalidate the Claim of the Canon Regulars) which bore date before the Year 1400, without any Author's Name thereunto: Which MS. was at the Abby of the Benedictins at Paris, expos'd to publick View to be perus'd and examin'd by the most Celebrated Learned Persons, and the best Judges of the Authentickness of ancient Manuscripts; amongst whom Gabriel Naudæus, and several other Learned Men, and fam'd for their Knowledge therein, did declare, that the Title of the Book now stil'd de Imitatione Christi, was in all the most antient MSS. entituled, de Musica Ecclesiastica: And the new Title taken from the initial Words thereof, Qui sequitur me non ambulat in Tenebris, is of a much later date. This gives me occasion to take notice to you, that Sebastian Castalio in his Translation of that Book into elegant Latin, justly takes exception against that Title as improper, and styles his polite Translation de Christo Imitando.

I must further declare to you, that the aforementioned time of the hot Controversie betwixt the Canon-Regulars, and the Benedictin-Monks, Gabriel Naudæus, and divers other eminently Learned Men, did, in several Tracts they then publish'd on that Subject, positively assert, that the affixing the Name of Joannes Gersen, sive de Gessen to the MSS. on the Authority of which the Benedictins ground their Claim, was an apparent Forgery, as also was the date of all other MSS. before the Year 1400. without any Author's Name inserted.

I shall now only add, that some Years ago being in Conversation with Mr. Obadiah Walker, he happened to cite an Expression out of his Favourite Book (as he term'd it) de Imitatione Christi, omitting the Name of T. à Kempis, to whom 'tis most commonly ascrib'd, which occasion'd a Discourse about the eminent Controversie, who was the genuine Author thereof; and upon my remarking to him, that Joan. Jac. Frisius in his Epitome of Gesner's Bibliotheca, and Joan. Pitseus renumerating the Works of Walter Hilton, make mention of a Book compos'd by him, stil'd, de Musica Ecclesiastica, and recites the first Words there-

of,

of, *Qui sequitur me non ambulat, &c.* which are the initial Words of the Book de Imitatione Christi, and enquiring of him whether he had ever taken any notice thereof in those Authors, he not only told me he had, but did positively aver to me, that he had seen, perus'd and compar'd the MS. of Walter Hilton, de Musica Ecclesiastica, with the Book de Imitatione Christi, most generally ascrib'd to Thomas a Kempis, and that throughout, it exactly agreed therewith, abating some literal Errata, and some few Words and Expressions which did not in the least vary the Sense. Whilst we were thus discoursing, some Persons, Strangers to me, intervening, with whom Mr. Walker declared he had some private Concern I left him, and to my great Regret, never had an opportunity of seeing him afterwards, which if I had, I should not have fail'd to enquire of him, where he saw that MS. of Walter Hilton? What was the date thereof? And if he could inform me where it might now be found?

In obedience to your Commands I send you this Account, which I submit to your Candid Censure, and am with a just regard,

SIR, Your most faithful and very

Humble Servant, C. HATTON.

§. XLVI. And here I shall add an Extract of another Letter, sent me from Oxford, in Answer to an Enquiry of mine upon this Head, by the Occasion of the foregoing Letter; viz. 'According to your Order we have consulted Theod. Petreius, in his Catalogue of the Writings of Walt. Hilton, he reckons this Book de Ecclesiastica Musica, and cites for his Authority Posssevinus and Simlerus. We consulted the Titles of the Treatises of this Letter contained in our publick Library, and finding nothing that promised any Account of Hilton; we had recourse to Posssevinus, who attributes Musica Ecclesiastica to Hilton; Posssevin's Book was publish'd about the Year 1603, under the Title of Apparatus sacer Ecclesiasticorum Scriptorum. As for the Manuscripts, there are none either in Merton or Lincoln College, according to the printed Catalogue. In Magdalen College we found one entitled, Musica Ecclesiastica, the same with the Book de Imitatione Christi, but ascribed to no particular Author. The Bodleian Library has two Manuscripts, with the same Title of Musica Ecclesiastica. One contains only the first Book de Imitat. Christi, and

no

no more : The other contains the whole Book *de Imitat.* &c. excepting the first Chapter, with a little of the beginning of the second, which are wanting, but the Author is mentioned in neither of them. As for the Birth and Death of *Hilton*, neither *Possevin*, nor *Petreius* say any thing of it ; only the former has this Expression, *Aiunt vero eum floruisse Henrico sexto Anglorum Rege*, which *Petreius* repeats out of him with this Addition, *Licet Carthusiam in qua vixerit, non exprimant*. At the end of the more perfect of the two above-mention'd Bodleian Manuscripts, there is this Advertisement added in a Red Letter, but in the same Character with the Black Letter of the Manuscript, *Scriptus erat Liber ille anno Verbi incarnati JESU Milless. Quadringintess. LXIX. & anno Inviictiss. Principis, & Domini nostri Domini Edwardi Dei Gratia Regis Angliæ & Franciæ, ac veri & indubitati Heredis Regum Castellæ & Legionum octavo. i. e.* This Book was written in the one thousandth, four hundredth and LXIXth Year of the Word Incarnate JESUS, and in the VIIIth Year of the most invincible Prince, and our Lord, the Lord *Edward*, by the Grace of God King of *England* and *France*, and true and undoubted Heir of the Kings of *Castile* and *Leon*. From which it is evident, that it was copied under this Title while a *Kempis* was living ; and none have yet been able to find *T. a Kempis* ever put out a Book under the Title of *Musica Ecclesiastica*, (or indeed any one else, besides our *Walter Hilton*) which begins with these Words, *Qui sequitur me*. Wherefore, if this were truly the ancient Title, according to what the three mention'd Oxford Manuscripts would persuade us, as also according to those others which *Possevin*, *Simler* and *Pitsens* must probably refer to, as well as those that were examin'd by *Naudens* bearing that Inscription : There is little doubt but that *Hilton* must have been the Author, if not of the whole four Books, at least of one of them. The *Magdalen* MS. is still more ancient, being dated *Nov. 29. 1433.* and was written also by one of the first Recluses of that very House in which *Hilton* liv'd. And now at this very time I have in my Hands an exact Transcript of a very old *English* Manuscript, which is mention'd in the Appendix to the Catalogue of the Bodleian MSS. and did formerly belong to *Dr. John Madden*, late

late of *Dublin* ; containing the three first Books of that Divine Treatise (but wanting that which we call the *fourth*) without any Name, or so much even as mentioning it to be a Translation, under this very Title of *Musica Ecclesiastica* ; the which would afford occasion for several Reflections, which must not here be insisted on. It was since the first Edition of this Volume, communicated to me generously by my most Learned and Pious Friend Mr. *Henry Dodwell*, who look'd on the Original as so valuable a Piece, that he thought it not unworthy his Labour and Time to copy it himself *Literatim*, with the greatest Accuracy. It is without Date also, as well as without Name : but by the Language of it, 'tis manifest that it must have been written about the time of our *Edward* the IVth, or while *Hilton* was yet living. And it is farther remarkable, that it is not divided into Books, but into *Parts*, as *Hilton's* Treatises are observ'd to have been, particularly his famous one, intitul'd, *Scala Perfectionis*, or the Ladder of Perfection ; and as is agreeable also with another Manuscript, which did belong to *Leo Allatius*, and with the *French Gothick*, whereof a Translation was some few Years since publish'd at *Paris* ; so that all the three Parts make but one Book, which is also call'd the Book of *Inward Consolation*, upon the Authority not only of the *English*, but also of the *French* and *Latin* Manuscripts, which appear most ancient. Whence 'tis not unreasonable to suppose, that the division into *Parts*, was ancients than that into *Books* : And that the true and genuine Title hereof, was *MUSICA ECCLESIASTICA*, whereunto, for Interpretation of it, there was afterward added, *Sive de Interna Consolatione* ; that is, of Spiritual Consolation. It being fashionable about that time to give such mystical, or metaphorical Titles to their Treatises of Piety and Devotion : And it being highly also improbable, that if this had not been the true Title, any one (whether Transcriber or Translator) would have left out the plain Title of the *Imitation of Christ*, and in the room of it substituted This, that seems at first so strange. Which may suffice concerning the Title, as it is found in the Catalogue of *Hilton's* Treatises, and in no other besides. And farther it is worthy of Remark, that there are no Marks in this Manuscript, by which it may plainly be made out to be

a *Translation*: and were it not for the universal Tradition of its having been first written in *Latin*, there are some, and those not a few, which might render it doubtful, whether the Original were *Latin* or *English*. Nor is there any thing in the whole, so far as I can find, but what is well enough agreeable with the Character of our *Hilton*. Besides which, I have been also inform'd by another worthy and learned Friend, concerning an ancient *Welsh* Manuscript of the same, containing also no more than three Books, or Parts, and favouring the aforesaid Conjecture; but of this latter I must be at present silent. And as for the former, I cannot here stay to shew the Conformity of the Style and Language, with that which is undoubtedly *Hilton's*; as well as of the Sentiments and Maxims found in this Book, with those which are in his *Ladder of Perfection*. Some worthy and judicious Gentlemen of my Acquaintance that have seen it, have hereupon earnestly press'd me, that I would hand it into the World, that so valuable a Remain of *English* Antiquity and Piety, might not be utterly lost. And accordingly, having the Leave and Approbation of Mr. *Dodwell*, with his and others Advice, the *same* is now almost fitted for the Press, with *Observations* upon it, and a *Glossary* of the antiquated Words and Terms; besides a Version of it in modern *English*, for the sake of the unlearned Reader, and a Dissertation upon the whole, in order to make it probable that the Piece is either actually of *English* Extraction, or else very early Naturaliz'd by our Countryman *Hilton*, and that the IVth Book was afterward added by some other Hand. But whether *Hilton*, or any other, were the original Author of some Part; it sufficiently appears, that all must at least have been compil'd, digested, and improv'd, as now it is, by this our Author; for whom, besides the Authority of ancient Manuscripts and Editions, there is abundance more to be said, but I am afraid I have been already too tedious.

§. XLVII. To conclude this Matter: Among all the Competitors with our Author, none has a fairer Plea than our Country Man; for whom there are some other Arguments yet behind, which may not have been observed hitherto, that seem much to legitimate his Title to the precedent Volume, or good part thereof. But should that
be

be even granted, this will no wise invalidate the Authority of the blessed Saint; from whose more certainly Genuine Works this present Volume is compil'd in English. So that by following only the Method of our Country-man *Carre* in his *Thomas à Kempis a seipso Restitutus*, it may be no such hard matter to find out, whether, and how far his Right may be establish'd with respect to both these Volumes. I have said little as to the Evidence from Manuscripts, that having been handled abundantly by others. So much foul Play has been herein used, as would be endless to unravel, as well as useles. There are Five Manuscripts in *Oxford*; and of these Three are inscrib'd *Musica Ecclesiastica*, the fourth is without either Name or Title, having three Leaves cut out in the beginning as with a Pen-knife; and the Fifth which bears the (now common) Title *De Imitatione Christi*, and comes nearest the printed Copies, has the Name (as was before observ'd) of the elder *à Kempis*, not of ours. As it was the Method of our Author to publish his own Treatises, either as *Anonymous*, or else under the Name of *Frater Peregrinus*, it has been so very difficult from hence to determin exactly which are His. And thus by his Humility, Occasion was given for the Brigues of the Contending Parties, to the no small Scandal of Religion. There is among the Manuscripts of Arch-Bishop *Laud* a very old Impression; dated 1485. which has this Subscription. *Explicit Lib. de Imit. Christi conscriptus a viro quodam Religioso, qui forte ob humilitatem suam noluit sibi ascribere hujusmodi librum per proprium Nomen: i. e.* Here endeth the Book of the Imitation of Christ, written by a certain Religious [or Regular] who possibly by reason of his Humility, would not ascribe to himself such a Book by his Own Name, which may serve for an Answer to the violent Contenders about this Matter.

§. XLVIII. As for his Works, both those which were by himself first written, and those that were Compil'd by him out of others, take this imperfect Account, instead of Better. In the Edition of them by *Fontebraldens* at *Antwerp*, A. 1574. they are in this Order. 1. Of the Imitation of Christ *Two* Books; the First Book containing XXXVII Chapters. And this comprehends the whole First and

and Second Books as found in the vulgar Editions of this Divine Treatise. The Second Book containing LXIV Chapters, makes the more considerable Part, and treats purely of Mystical Theology; being that which is commonly call'd the *Third*, 2. The little Book of the Sacrament of the Altar, which is the same with the IVth Book of the Imitation; containing XVIII Chapters, to which Three others are added in a *Roman Edition*, under the Name of the *Great and Venerable Servant of God, John Gersen*; but which are undoubtedly later, and by another Hand. 3. Of the Discipline of Recluses, *Five Books*, whereof the *First* is by some made a Fifth Book of the Imitation of Christ, or a Continuation of the aforesaid Treatise. This has never been yet disputed to be of our *T. à Kempis*. The other *Four Books* were superadded, we are told, by the Celestine Monks of *Villeneuve in Soissons*: They are compil'd together in that Form out of several Tracts of our Author, or such as were at least transcrib'd by him, and had the Stamp upon them of that Society whereof he was a Member; among which I esteem that of the Elevation of the Mind to the Search after the Supreme Good, which is inserted in the IVth Book, to be one of the most Considerable. 4. The Novices, a Dialogue. This also was certainly written by our Author, and seems to be chiefly a Collection of the Memorable Sayings and Counsels of the antient Fathers of that Congregation, such as both the *Gerards, Florentius, Brinckerink, Vander-Busche, Gruter, Schoenhove, &c.* but without reciting their Names in a Conference betwixt *Novice and Senior*. 5. The young Mans Manual or *Doctrinal*, which seems much of a piece with the former. And therefore it is not improbable but it may contain the Lessons which *Florentius* gave him. The Foundation of it is the diligent Study of the Holy Scripture. 6. The Erudition of a good Steward in *Three Books*. This Treatise distinctly considers the State of the Active and Contemplative Lives, and gives a comparison of them both, under the Allegory of *Martha and Mary*; very useful to them that follow either. 7. Of Solitude *Two Books*. In praise of the Solitary Life, and of Silence, written to a Religious Man that was dismiss'd from his Office, that he might the better apply himself to a Life of Contemplation. 8. Of the three Tabernacles:

An admirable Treatise concerning the three Military Virtues, which are Poverty, Humility and Patience; and one never yet question'd to have been written by this our Author, though it be found in a Manuscript pretended to have been writ about an Hundred Years before he was Born, and that even by no less a Person than the Learned *Mabillon* himself, that great Honour of his Order. Who, to give an Instance from *MSS.* of the manner of writing about the *MCCCC*th Year, brings a *MS.* of the Imitation belonging to Mr. *Thevenot*, after the First Book of which, there follows this very Treatise of the Military Virtues written with the same Hand. Notwithstanding that *Mabillon* doth expressly allow this to be a true and genuine Piece of our *à Kempis*, in his very *Animadversions* against his Vindication, and consequently that the said *MS.* could not possibly be written before the Year *MCCCC* at soonest. Such a strange Power has Prejudice for or against an Author, as even to blind a Man of his Sagacity and uncommon Candour, and to make him by inadvertence choose this, which even otherwise would have been very disputable, when he could have found an Hundred Instances of that time which might have been undisputed.

9. Of the true Compunction of the Heart: which is generally confess'd to be his; and by none that I know of yet disputed. It may very well be read the first of all his Works, as a most proper Introduction to them. 10. The little *Rose-Garden*; containing the Maxims of Morality and Practical Holiness, according to the Rule of St. *Anthony*, in that Society of his Canons, a Piece also never yet question'd to be of him. 11. *The Valley of Lillies*: much of the same Kind, as well as Style with the former, being a rare Treatise of Christian Ethicks, with proper Meditations on Soliloquies, on some Passages of God's Word. 12. The Consolation of the Poor: A sort of Appendix to the two last Treatises, which seems to have been address'd to some particular Persons of his near Acquaintance, then in Trouble or Temptation. 13, and 14. The little Manual of the *Religious*, and the Life of a good *Religious*, are short Memorials fitted chiefly for the use of the Cloister, and the latter is for the help of the Memory, put into the Monkish Rhymes; under which, yet the Lessons contain'd

are

are not so much to be despised. 15. *The Manual of the little Ones* upon those Words of Christ, *Suffer little Children to come unto me*: A most commendable Tract for the Education of Youth. 16. *The Hospital of the Poor*, wherein there is mention made both of *Florentius* and *Gerardus Magnus*, and both their Maxims and manner of interpreting the Scriptures, are followed. 17. *The Soliloquy of the Soul*, never disputed to be our Authors. 18. *Sermons*. Two Books. One to the Novices, the other to the Professed. That to the Novices, is divided into three Parts, containing in all XXX Sermons; the other consists but of IX, and these are particular Discourses to the Brethren, which may as well be call'd so many Chapters, being written in the Style of his other Books, with a Sentence of Scripture in the beginning of it, but without any Texts to the rest; and treating upon the principal Subjects of their Profession, as the forsaking of Self and Contempt of earthly Comforts, of the Consolation of the Soul in God, of the twofold Compunction of the Soul for the Heavenly Country, of the Pearl of Chastity, of Temptations and the Thorn in the Flesh, of the Benefit of Solitude, of the Fruit of Silence, and of the Souls Internal Quiet, or Solitude of the Heart, lifting up of the Soul above her self into Christ. These have the Character of being Genuine, but there is not so much to be said for the *third* part of those to the Novices. 19. His *Epistles* follow next, which never have been doubted of by any; and which in my opinion fall not short of any thing that has been publish'd in his Name. The first of them is a most sweet and admirable Incitement to a Progress in the Spiritual Life; and is Printed by *Horstius* as a set Discourse at the end of the Second Volume, of the Select and Genuine Pieces of our Author; he having contriv'd in two little Volumes for the Pocket, the *Four Books* which so hotly have been controverted, with useful *Annotations*, and as many others which never have been controverted at all, but do breathe the very *same* Spirit, for the perfecting of the *Christian Traveller*, or Follower of Christ. The Letters of his that are preserv'd are but *Six*. 20. *His Lives*, In Three Books. The first contains the Life of *Gerardus Magnus*, wherein we have a very plain but good Account of the Rise of the Congregations for

Reformation, according to the Primitive and Apostolical Standard. The Second contains that of *Florentius*; wherein we have an Account of the Establishment of the same under his Successor, with the complete Character of a true Spiritual Governor, or Pastor. The Third contains the History of his *Disciples*, being Contemporaries with our Author; *De Gronde* only excepted, that dy'd a Year before his coming to *Deventer*, wherein we have related the flourishing Progress of this Establishment, in the Holy Lives of Nine of the first Clerks of this Society. There is likewise added in some later Editions of his Works, the Life of a certain Miraculous *Dutch Maid*, but which for several Reasons I conclude to be Spurious. The *Monks Alphabet* is also pretty generally attributed to our Author, but some think that *Bonaventure* has the better Title to it; and accordingly it is Printed in his Works. There are some again that divide the Matter, claiming it for *Bonaventure* originally, but supposing that *a Kempis* might revise it, and add to it the Prologue and Epilogue. Concerning the Hymns that are under his Name, I can say little, whether they be his or anothers. But concerning his Chronicle, tho' last publish'd, there has never been the least doubt made by any to this day. There is a great Difference in the Editions of his Works; but I have chosen this rather than another, as being neither a very early nor a very late one, against both of which there lie Objections.

§. XLIX. As to his Style and manner of Writing, take his Character given by a Judicious Observer, and one that was as well acquainted with it perhaps as any: His Style, tho' simple and wholly unembellish'd, fir'd with the Genius of the Age, and hardly to be call'd *Latin*, is nevertheless clear and open, so as it never sticks for want either of Words or Things, and hath in it nothing hard or perplex'd. What he conceived and brought forth in his Mind, was evidently demonstrated by him under the Poverty of Speed, and in despite of the World set forth in a poor Style, for he scarce ever forced himself to hide or suppress what he thought, or to put any Colours upon it, but easily and clearly expresses all his Sentiments, or Conceptions, after a free and frank manner. This is the Judgment of *Tolensis*, who, upon consideration of the Barbarousness of the Style,
living

living in an Age when the *Ciceronian* was much studied, was excited to do the same for the *Roman* Catholick, as *Castalio* for the Protestant Reader, with respect to the Treatise † of the Imitation; that it might thereby be better entertain'd by those who had cast off even the reading of the Bible it self, because of the Barbarity of its Language in the receiv'd Translation, for fear lest it might spoil their *Latin*.

s. L. In writing several of his Treatises, he confesses that he had the Assistances of several of his devout Contemporaries, besides the Memoirs of his Predecessors and Elders. And it seems to me as if all those Books of his which are written by way of Dialogue, betwixt a Novice and a Senior, or which are chiefly a Collection of wise Sayings digested under certain Heads, are of this Number. Therefore the Preface to his Dialogue of the Contempt of the World, which we call the *Novices*, begins with that Command of our Lord in John vi. 12. *Gather up the Fragments that remain, that nothing be lost*, which are by him apply'd to the memorable Sayings, and pious Remains, of them that had been eminent in that Society, leaving behind them a sweet Odour of unfeigned Holiness. And it is observable that all the three Books of Lives are continued after the same manner, in form of a Conference betwixt a Novice and his Senior, or Instructor, wherein he was certainly helpt by Friends; some of whose Names he has mention'd. Now besides those that have been already taken notice of, it appears that he had also a particular Esteem for these here that follow, as first, Mr. Warmbold, a famous Preacher at *Utrecht*, being a most fervent Lover of the Holy Scripture, and a great Friend of *Florentius*, mightily flock'd too: Then Mr. William Herry's of *Amersford*, who begun a Congregation of Clerks, which afterward became Canons of *St. Austins-Rule*, following the Pattern both of *Gerardus* and *Florentius*: Mr. Henry Good of *Zwoll*, another excellent Preacher, very devout, and a notable Despisers of the World. Mr. Gerard Kalker of the same Place, Rector of

† *De Imitando Christo, &c. Libri IV. Authore Thoma Kempisio, ex Latino Latinores facti, F. Francisco Tolensi Canon Regulari interprete. Antwerpiae apud Joanneme Bellerum, 1575.*

the Devout Clerks, and a very excellent Informer in Virtue and Religion. These were all of the Province of *Utrecht*, and took their Steps in concert with the Canons of *Dr. Gerard's* Establishment. Also *Mr. Pauli* of *Medenblic*, a Person of a downright honest Heart, and wholly devoted to God. *Mr. Hugh Goldsmith* of *Harlem*, well acquainted with *Dr. Gerard* and *Florentius*, and by them much esteem'd. *Mr. Henry Brune*, or *Brown*, of *Leyden*, familiarly acquainted with our Author, and by whom he professes himself to have been very much Edified; beholding him as a true Israelite in whom there was no Guile, and as a Dove without any worldly Gall; he being endow'd with a singular Innocency of Life, and holy Simplicity of Manners; and besides a great Contemplatist. *Mr. Gilbert Dou*, or *Dove*, of *Amsterdam*, the Founder of two Religious Houses there, and a general Promoter of Spiritual Life. *Mr. Darick Gruter* of *Duyssbrouch*, in *Guelderland*, an Old Disciple of *Dr. Gerard*, from whom our Author received much Information concerning him. To whom may deserve to be added *Dr. John Behme*, Vicar of the great Church at *Deventer*, and Rector of the School, our Author's Tutor, that has been before mention'd: and *Dr. Everhrad Eza* of *Almelo*, a Physician of great Practice, but very Charitable, who was a good Friend of *Florentius*; and ready to serve him and his Clerks for God's Sake. These are those whose Memories are honour'd by our Author, with whom he had sweet Fellowship in the Spirit; and with whose Charity and Zeal for the Honour of God he was built up himself, and built up others; and therefore it was thought fit here to preserve their Memorial, together with his.

§. LI. He died *July* the Twenty Fifth, in the Year *MCCCCCLXXI* of Christ, and the *XCII*d of his Age, with the sweet Odour of Sanctity, having liv'd Threescore and Eleven Years in religious Retirement, and seen Five Emperors, Twelve Popes, and Three Antipopes. For his Person, he was of a little Stature, well proportion'd, of a strong brown Complexion, of a manly Countenance, and of a quick piercing Eye; which notwithstanding all his Night-labours, grew not dim, so that even to the last he never used Spectacles, but continued a sharp and strong Sight. The industrious and learned *Papebrochius* gives an

hint

hint that there was some Thoughts in the Church of *Rome* of Canonizing him for a Saint: And *Badins* in the Life of him, expressly gives him the Title of *Divus*, no less than *Beatus*: And the same *Papebrochius* relates how his Body was miraculously discovered in 1672 on the 13th of *August*, *N. S.* and adds, that it was to be hoped, *ut Religioso cultu eum aliquando venerari liceat.*

§. LII. As for what is performed in this present Volume of his Works, render'd into *English*, and compil'd out of his select Pieces, according to the Method of the precedent Volume of the Imitation; Care has been taken to express the Mind and Spirit of the Author, with as much Exactness as the Difference of Circumstances would permit; and without losing too much of that true native Simplicity, which is an elegance Transcending all what is most Artificial. When I met with any thing more peculiarly to be noted, or very emphatical in the Original, there I have strictly and closely adhered to the Letter of my Author. Otherwise I have taken such a Liberty, as any one in prudence ought, and as he himself has recommended. In the First Book is contain'd the Authors excellent Tract of true Compunction, with the Substance of another concerning Mortification. In the Second Book are the Morals of this Author, as contained in his *Hortulus Rosarum*, and the *Epitaphium boni Monachi*, with some few Fragments; being digested by way of Conference between Master and Disciple. This to the Twentieth Chapter was about Fourscore Years since done into *English* by one *Hill*, under the Title of *A little Garden of Roses*; or, *Holy Observations of Instruction*: and the *Farewel to the World*, in the Third Chapter, is reform'd from him. In the Third Book are compriz'd the Two Books of his Spiritual Exercises, with what is of the like nature scatter'd in his other Writings. Of this I know nothing that has been ever yet attempted in *English*: And yet perhaps no Part of his Works will be found more serviceable to many Devout Souls, than this. Here I was oblig'd to take a greater Liberty, to make that more Universal, which was designed only for the Use of a particular Society; yet was not to depart herein either from the Genius and Spirit of

the Author, or from what he had principally in Aim in this *Bipartite* of Holy Exercises, Outward and Inward; or to give offence to any Party or Body of Christians. And in the IVth Book is that most rich Treasure of the Soliloquy of the Soul; which was in the Reign of Q. Elizabeth first set forth in *English* by Mr. T. Rogers, as a Fourth Book of the Imitation; and which *Horstius* has plac'd first in the second Volume of his most curious Edition of his *Viator Christianus*, as immediately succeeding the said Imitation, which makes the First (as this with some others of his choicest Pieces make the Second) Volume. Rogers gives it the Title of *The Sole-talk of the Soul*; or, "A Spiritual and Heavenly Dialogue betwixt the Soul of Man and God. Which for the great Affinity it hath with other Books of the Author, publish'd heretofore in our native Tongue, is now entituled, *The Fourth Book of the Imitation of Christ*. Translated and Corrected by Thomas Rogers, A. 1598. This Old Translation I had heard of, but met not with it till the greatest part of my Labour being over, I was mightily pleased to find that he had the very same Sentiments with me, in perfect Agreement with the Author's own Intention, according as he thus expresseth himself. "Being much and earnestly requested heretofore, I have publish'd in our Vulgar Tongue another of *Mallecolus*, alias *Thomas à Kempis*, or *Kempisus* his Works: Not That I confess which of some well Weening [Meaning] though not so well Deeming [Discerning] Persons was commended unto me; I mean that in the Old *English* Translation, and in some *Latin* Copies too, call'd, *The Fourth of the Imitation of Christ*, which indeed is altogether *De Sacramento Altaris*, and so entituled: But the next to that in *Kempisus's* Works, namely, the *Soliloquium Animæ*. This I have termed for the great Affinity it hath with the Books of *Kempisus*, by me heretofore divulg'd, *The Fourth Book of the Imitation of Christ*. In the doing whereof, I have as little as might be varied from the Authors Words and Phrases, and nowhere from the Sense, but where himself hath varied from the Truth of God: And, I doubt not, would have redress'd, had he liv'd in these Days of Light, as he did in the Time of most palpable Darknes. And this I

" have

“ have done with the greater Alacrity, because I find
 “ (and thou mayest read it also in the Author’s own Pre-
 “ face) that he not only doubted that he might utter some-
 “ thing both fond and offensive, but also wished to have
 “ some godly Corrector of his Faults, and prayed unto
 “ Almighty God graciously to reveal such things as were
 “ offensive, either unto himself, or unto some other.
 “ Whose godly Prayer God hath heard, and discovered
 “ those things for thy Benefit; and a Testification besides
 “ how *Kempis* the Author howsoever living in a Po-
 “ pish time, was yet in Heart no Papist, but would like
 “ well of that which is done, as I trust thou wilt. Thus
 far *Rogers*, in his Preface.

§. LIII. Now as this was a good Apology for the Old
 Translator, it can be no bad one for the New; who thinks
 he should have been unjust to the excellent Author, had
 he not accepted the Liberty, which he freely gives, and
 not only gives, but even presses. I shall conclude with
 the Words of *Pirc-Kamer* in a Letter of his to *Danhausser*;
 1494 Feb. 12. “ Nothing more holy, nothing more ho-
 “ nourable, nothing more religious, nothing lastly more
 “ for the Christian Common-weal can you ever do, than
 “ to take care that these Books of *T. à Kempis* be made
 “ publick: Which, tho’ hitherto not taken notice of, as
 “ Fire hidden in the Veins of a Flint, may be very great-
 “ ly useful and serviceable to the Christian Religion.
 Then he tells how some had with these put to flight
 the Powers of Darkness: And having given a Character
 of the Author upon his own Knowledge, he addresses him-
 self to his Friend again, in this manner: “ It will be
 “ well and considerately done of you, if you bring them
 “ out of Dust and Obscurity into the Light, that they
 “ may be commonly read, as which do either lead Minds
 “ disposed and prepared to the Quest of their eternal Hap-
 “ piness, and the Contemplation of useful Learning and
 “ solid Wisdom; and this after an easy, swift, and com-
 “ pendious Method: Or else do fortify those that are al-
 “ ready Devout and Spiritual; vindicating them from the
 “ shameful Ignorance and Inexperience, which is here
 “ so extreemly dangerous. And of how great Edificati-
 “ on these Works are like to be for all Christians, even
 “ the

“ the greatest and the most learned not excepted; it is im-
“ possible to speak or write. Do not then slight them,
“ courteous Sir, for that they are composed in a vulgar
“ and plain Style; for as much as God himself would have
“ it to be so with the Apostles, that they might be with-
“ out the enticing Flattery of Words, and Ornament of
“ Speech; because that Truth for being simple and naked
“ is so much the brighter, and sacred Theology enough in
“ her self adorn’d, with the Addition of outward Orna-
“ ments is but corrupted, and daub’d over as with Fucus.
“ With Falshood and Error this may agree well enough,
“ that have need to appear under another and a fairer
“ Dress than their own. Whereas the venerable Father
“ *Thomas of Kempen* not trusting to Eloquence, but to
“ Truth, composed these Works: Whose Style, tho’ it
“ flow but meanly as from a gentle bubbling Spring, yet
“ shines clearly with its own Light and intrinsick Lustre,
“ As for Philosophers, with Orators and Poets, while they
“ with the enticing Words of Mans Wisdoin, and the
“ sweet Charms of Numbers are fitted to allure and defile
“ the Mind, they are herein for certain very Pernicious to
“ the Unwary. Wherefore these same Tracts of *St. Tho-*
“ *mas à Kempis* are no wise for want of these to be neglected,
“ or slighted, by any Learned Man, O most Learned *Pe-*
“ *ter*; for so I find the Holy Scripture it self has been by
“ some of the Learned despised for the same Reason.

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O Tenebre & Lubricum! quam diu inclar & tenebris?
Book y.^e 1.st

M. J. F. Gault & Co.

OF THE
 IMITATION
 OF
 Jesus Christ.

The First Book.

The Sighs of a Penitent SOUL :

OR, A
 TREATISE of True Compunction.

C H A P. I.

The Sinner beginning to Return.

WEEP with me, all my Friends, and see my Grief; for it is vehement. Look upon my Wound; for it is deep. What is it that I weep for? It is this, even for this, that I am cast out from the Face of the God of Heaven, and from before his Eyes. I sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death; and I behold not the Light of Heaven.

B

What

What Joy therefore can there be for me ? I, poor little wretched Man, went down from *Jerusalem* to *Fericho*, and fell among most cruel Thieves; who even robbed me of my Robe of Immortality, and having grievously wounded me, departed, leaving me half dead.

The Watchmen of the City found me, they smote me, they wounded me also; and the Keepers of the Walls moreover took away my Veil from me.

Now therefore, O ye Daughters of *Jerusalem*, go tell the Beloved, that I am filled with Grief. Send unto him, saying, *Behold, Lazarus, whom thou lovest, is sick.* Lord, thy Servant lieth on the Bed sick of the Palsie, and is grievously tormented. I have now these many Years laboured under this Infirmary; I have been long, long, diseased; I, thy Servant, have been a Cripple from the Womb of my Mother: because I am obnoxious to, and bow'd down with, the Bond of Original Sin.

C H A P. II.

His Fear and Dread.

AH me ! I am the Son of *Adam* the Transgressor, and the Son of Death, wholly born in Sin, Wretched my Entrance, and horrible my Exit ! And whither shall I flee ? I know not.

If I ascend into Heaven, thou art there, who sparest not Sinners, and if I descend into Hell, thou art present, that thou may'st punish the Transgressors.

Ah ! Where shall I hide my self from the Looks of thy Wrath ? For I have sinned exceedingly in my Life. I looked up towards Heaven, and God said, *Let the Wicked be taken away, that he see not my Glory.*

Then

Then again looked I down into the *Abyss*, and a terrible Voice sounded in my Ears: *Bind him Hand and Foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of Teeth.*

Hence, greatly confounded, I began to Dread, and to be exceeding Sorrowful; nay, and all my Bones to quake and shiver, from before the presence of the Lord and of his Fiery Wrath and Indignation. Fearfulness and Trembling are come upon me, and an horrible Darkness hath overwhelm'd me.

And I said, Who then can be saved? And if thou wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? Terrible and Holy is thy Name.

C H A P. III.

His Consolation and Encouragement.

BUT now hold, and be silent, my Soul; for I have heard a comfortable Voice speaking to them that are in Sorrow and Mourning: *Write, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* And again: *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*

The Voice of the Lord comforting his Servants: The Voice of the Lord admonishing from behind: *Return, saith the Voice, ye backsliding Children: Return, and live. Return to me, and I will return to you. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

Jerem. iii.
Ezek. xviii.
Matth. xi.

And the Prophet of the Lord meeting them that grieve, saith thus: *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart.* And concerning himself, he declareth this Word, full of Consolation: “The Lord
“ hath heard, and hath had mercy upon me: The

“ Lord is become my Helper; for he hath not despised the Prayer of the Poor.

Behold, there is yet room; and the Door is not yet shut. Thou canst, by Repentance, recover all again; and make up thy Loss, both as to the Evil thou hast done, and to the Good thou hast left undone.

Be not therefore now too much cast down, or terrified: For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. And again: *I am not come (saith he) to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.*

C H A P. IV.

His Faith and Confidence.

LIFT up therefore thy self, O my Soul, into a good Confidence; for that the Lord hath spoken. Thy Life drew near unto Hell, and thou wast delivered up unto Death: But the Lord took pity upon thee, and considered how to shew thee his Mercy.

Thou wast greatly afraid of the Face of the Lord, and thoughtest with thy self how thou shouldst hide thy self from Him, even as Father *Adam* did when he sinned. Thou wast also meditating a flight into some Region or other, in like manner as *Jonas* fled from the Presence of the Lord with a Ship. But herein also thou hast seen the Vanity of thy Attempt, and exposed the more thy own Folly. All in vain hast thou laboured: For neither by hiding, nor by fleeing, shalt thou escape the Hand of God.

Return therefore into the Heavenly Region by another Way; a Way which the Lord hath shewed thee, that thou may'st walk in it. This is the Way: *Repent.* This is the Way: *He that will follow Me, saith the Holy One thy Redeemer, let him deny himself.*

The

The best *Counsel*, and the strongest *Help* is given thee from Heaven. The *Counsel* is this : That thou worthily Repent thee for all thy Misdeeds, and by Sorrow unfeign'd avenge thy self as it were on the same; and so make thy Peace with God in Faith.

Thy *Help* is from the Lord, even the Lord that made Heaven and Earth; who, being so Great, yet hath vouchsafed to pay for thee the whole Debt.

For he delivered up his Soul unto Death, and made Intercession for the Transgressors, that they might not perish: And so by his own Death hath he snatched thee from Eternal Death; and wrought out Salvation for thee through his Cross.

For thy Transgression he was stricken; and for thee, O wretch, he poured out his Soul an Offering for Sin, that so thou might'st be acquitted. Lo! Was there ever any Love like to this Love? Be astonish'd, O ye Heavens!

C H A P. V.

The Gospel-Testimony.

BEhold, the Lamb of God, that hath taken away our Sins, nailing them to his Cross; and hath blotted out the Hand-writing that was against us; spoiling, for our sakes, even Principalities and Powers, and openly triumphing over them! Glory be to thee, O Lamb of God, Saviour of the World!

This now is what the Evangelical Prophet has in most lively Colours describ'd, by whom the Holy Ghost did foreshew, how the Chastisement of thy Peace, O my Soul, was upon him, and how with his Stripes thou art to be healed. This is what also the holy Apostle, St. Paul, recommends to the Faithful, assuring us,

that through the Faith of Divine Operation, we are
 Ephes. ii. *quickened together with him*, who were before
 Colos. ii. dead in our Trespases and Sins, that so we
 might live unto Him.

Hence also in another place the same Apostle saith,
 1 Tim. i. *This is a true Saying, and worthy of all Men to
 be received, that Christ Jesus came into the
 World to save Sinners.*

And this also agrees with what that beloved Apo-
 1 John ii. *stle, St. John, hath written, saying, If any
 Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father,
 Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for
 our Sins.*

Behold, what Consolation, and what and how great
 Hope God hath left for Sinners: But yet not for all
 promiscuously, but for the Penitent and Converted
 Ones.

Be thou now mindful, O returning Soul, of his
 Holy Word, wherein he hath given thee a ground
 of Hope; lay fast hold on all the sweet and tender
 Promises: And, being weary and heavy laden with
 the weight of thy Corruption, delay not to come
 unto him; but obey presently his most loving and
 amiable Call.

And now, O LORD, I prostrate my self in Prayer
 before Thee; and do cry unto Thee from the very
 bottom of my Heart. O let my Groans come up in
 thy sight; and let my Petition find Favour and Accep-
 tance with Thee, my God, the Father of all Mercies;
 who art infinitely and essentially *Mercy*,

C H A P. VI.

The Prayer of a Sinner converted to God.

LORD GOD, Holy Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy Son: But, O my Father, I beseech thee, make me at least but as one of thine hired Servants.

Thou art *just* in thy Dealing, if thou castest me away quite from thy Presence: Yea, Just art thou, O Lord. But thou dealest with me *mercifully*; receiving one that am unworthy of every Benefit, even altogether unworthy of the very meanest of all thy Benefits.

Confiding therefore in this thy Mercy, I cast myself down at thy Feet, I pour forth my Tears, I adore and devoutly kiss thy Footsteps, deprecating with an humble and contrite Heart thy just Wrath against me.

O GOD most Merciful! Canst thou look upon a Flea, or upon a dead Dog? If thou canst, O look upon me, and be pitiful to me, even as thou wast to the most blessed *Mary Magdalene*, once a Sinner like to me, who could so soon, so easily wrest a Pardon from thee, while she lay at thy Feet. O most sweet and compassionate *Jesu*, as thou didst receive her, even so receive me also now, and disdain not my Cry.

Draw out at length thy Loving-kindness to them that know Thee: Hold forth thy Mercy to me, seeking thy Face: Reach out thy right Hand to thy Fugitive Servant, and let thy most pitiful Eyes see the Contrition of my Heart. Neither let my Lord be angry for evermore, because of the Wickedness of his Servant; but let him call to mind the multitude of his Mercies; yea, the *universal* multitude of his Mercies from the beginning of the World, or even from

before the World; and so let him be appeased and reconciled to his Servant.

Hear, O LORD! Hear this one Petition which thy Servant poureth forth before thee; bowing his Knees before thy Omnipotence, adoring flat upon the Earth the Majesty of thy glorious Countenance, because I have done foolishly, and have acted exceeding madly, in so many times offending thy Clemency, not fearing the Throne of thy Kingdom.——— Forgive, I beseech thee, all manner of Guilt to thy Servant; and blot not out my Name from the Book of the Living, but mercifully vouchsafe therein to write me among those thou hast chosen for thy self; that so I may be found to the Praise and Glory of thy Name. *Amen.*

C H A P. VII.

A Meditation on the Divine Long-suffering.

O How great is thy Mercy, Lord! Who more abundantly to shew forth thy Goodness, was graciously pleased to deliver from Death, the Sons of Men most worthy of Death. Moreover, thou hast strove to recall, with thy most gracious Voice, the Vagabonds and Fugitives; sending thy faithful Servants and Friends at the Hour of Supper, to tell those that are invited, how that all things are ready, and that therefore they should come to the Marriage.

Whereas, according to the Order of Justice, thou oughtest to have sent post thy Pursuivants or Officers after thine Enemies, who would not have thee to Reign over them, and to slay those Murtherers, because they are worthy; or to have them cast into Prison, till they pay the utmost Farthing, and to be buried with them that lie in the Hell.

But

But thou hast not made use of this thy Authority and Power, but hast shewed all thy Clemency and Gentleness, patiently bearing all things till the time; that so thy Beloved Ones may be delivered, and may flee from the face of thy Justice; that is, that they by a true Conversion may prevent the Judgment which is to be dreaded.

For if thou would'st have stretched out thy Hand against the Wicked, and as many as have sinned, thou hadst destroyed many who are become thy Friends, and have even found with thee place among the Chiefest.

Thou would'st not now have had in Heaven *Peter*, who sinned, denying thee thrice; nor *Paul*, who persecuting thee, blasphemed; nor *Matthew* a Publican, who gaped after Earthly Lucre; nor indeed any one of thy great and principal Apostles, whom thou hast appointed Judges over the whole Earth.

But now they are become to thee verily most Dear and Beloved; and thou hast made known to them all things which thou hast heard from the Father: And thou art glorified in them, and they have glorified thy Name upon the Earth.

This thy Omnipotent Hand hath done, and thy Mercy, and thy Right Hand filled with all Sweetness.

For hiding all thy Wrath, thou hast been pleased to make us Children of Grace, Partakers of the Divine Nature, and Coheirs of thy Kingdom. Therefore, All Glory be to thee, O God.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Divine Methods in and after Conversion.

O Fountain of Pity and infinite Compassion, who never ceaseſt to overflow, but abideſt always ſtretched out to them that draw near to thee ! Fain would I that all might enter in unto thee, and taſte of the Proviſions of thy Table ; for they are ſweet, and in them there is no Death, (as the Sons of the Prophets of old complain'd) nor indeed any Bitterneſs.

However, I am not well pleaſed with all : For many do backſlide again, loving this World more than the Society of thy Children ; deſpairing in themſelves, and therefore yielding themſelves up to ſerve Iniquity and Uncleanneſs ; for whom there abideth a certain and fearful Judgment. And theſe being now afar off from thee, do expect to find De-
Job xxx. lights among Buſhes, and as it were under the Nettles gather themſelves together, in an eager purſuit of their own ſordid and moſt ſtinging Affections : For even ſo it becomes *Fooliſh Children*, and ſuch are *Viler than the Earth*

As for thy Beloved Children, and faithful Servants, being ſuch as have in abhorrence the Evil Things, they love thee with their whole Heart, and meditate Night and Day in thy Commandments ; and theſe thou hideſt under thy Wings, that they may not be caught with the Allurements of the World.

Theſe for the moſt part, burning with a vehement Deſire of Everlaſting Life, do long rather to be diſſolved, than to ſtay longer here ; that ſo they may live *with Thee* much more happily.

And if they are not heard, according to their will, it makes yet for their Salvation, and thy Diſpenſation, that they ſtill be exerciſed with Labours.

Not that thou, Lord, doſt then love them at all the
leſs,

less, because thou fulfillest not presently their Prayers and desires, but by thus delaying, thy Mind is more plentifully to reward those whom thou permittest more largely to be exercised and wearied in this World.

Well is it for them, who have obtained from thee so great a Grace, who are now wholly enflamed with the desire after Eternal Life; and, by the fruits of well-doing, even anticipate in some degree the Sheaves of the Harvest. Blessed are they whose Conversation is thus in Heaven, while they are upon the Earth; and who have, even here, a foretaste of the sweet and holy Powers of the World to come.

I, who am a Sinner, and who am pressed down with the weight of my Sins, how shall I dare to lift up mine Eyes to those choice Hills, thy great Saints, who have outgrown the Earthly Habitation, or the Valley of Tears; and do, even now, touch Heaven by the piercing Eye of Divine Contemplation!

Ah! How am I confounded, when I look but towards these Holy and Heavenly Ones, who are the *Men in Christ*, being grown up in Him to the stature of the perfect Manhood! O what a Dwarf am I, at the very best, in comparison of these! I am not able to look up; for my Soul is bowed downward, and even touches the *Earth*. O how blessed and happy are they, who are redeemed thus from the *Earth*, and who consequently can follow thee, O Christ, whithersoever thou callest or ledest them!

CHAP. IX.

On the State of the Unconverted.

WO, Wo, Wo (saith St. John the Apostle) to the Inhabitants of the *Earth*. Wo to the Carnal Minds, and such whose Desires are fixed upon this present

sent World. *Wo* also to them who are compassed about with the Stings of many Passions. And *Wo* to them that stray afar off from the Way of the Righteous. Who with their Hearts *inhabiting the Earth*, do not weep, but vainly laugh : And, what is still more grievous, when they do Evil in the presence of God, are not afraid hereof, but presently slight it, as if it were some trivial matter only.

What wonder is it therefore, if I now Grieve ! If yet (as is most fit and meet) I do *indeed* Grieve ! For the right and inward Grief changes wholly the Affection of the Person ; and will not consequently suffer him to rejoice, or take henceforward any Consolation, in Earthly Things and Objects.

See what and how great occasion there is for thee, O Man, now to grieve and weep. The Mind but seldom gathers in it self perfectly as it ought, and now and then the Truth hardly shines upon it, and the Soul but in a very little proportion receives of her Heavenly Food. Hence her Tears and Groans do deservedly flow forth, as she feels her self heavy laden with the Love of Earthly things, and finds her self such a stranger both to God and to her own self.

Whoever therefore hath an Heart within, let him take up his Lamentation, and say from the ground thereof in himself : *I have eaten Ashes as it were*
 Psal. cii. *Bread, and have mingled my Drink with Weeping,*

This, I say, is that which, pondering within my self, I must needs deplore. Too oft, alas ! I am unnecessarily involved in Earthly and Visible Things ; sometimes also am delighted therein ; and now and then, which is worst of all, am with difficulty plucked thence.

Ah me ! Fool that I am, who shall deliver me from these Evils that encompass me round ? Ah, what do I suffer, by touching the Affairs of the World, which are ever hurtful to me ; and which, tho' I many times hate and detest, yet I am again captivated thereby.

C H A P. X.

On the Misery and Dangers of this present Life.

O Mire, O worldly Mire! How long wilt thou stick to me? O Darknefs and Slipperinefs! How long must I be closed about with you? How long by your means, entangled must I be? How long shall I suffer you? And how long shall I be with you?

Great is my Infirmary, so that to stand is hard; but to fall under Vices and Calamities of Mind is easie.

For I am Earthly, being formed of the Earth; and hence, by Natural Frailty, perceive my self to be moved vastly more by Earthly than by Heavenly Impressions.

The eternal Good Things I have but a small appetite for; I relish not the things that are above; and my Strength dryeth away as a Potsherd, for I have forgotten to eat *my Bread*. *Mine!* I call it, even mine, which my Heavenly Father has given me: But now it is changed to me into that which is Earthly. And I, who could have been filled with the *Corn of Heaven*, lo! Do now feed on Ashes.

C H A P. XI.

The Conflict betwixt the Flesh and the Spirit.

A H, wretched Man that I am! What a strange Change is this! And how exceeding Unhappy am I, who am come into such a famishing Condition! Alas! How am I fallen from what I was! So as not knowing (or not caring for) those delicious Objects that are above, I turn my self to hunt after those
sorry

sorry ones that are below. Whence, O whence is it, that I can be thus content to lick the Dust, and to feed upon Dirt and Ashes !

I was created for Everlasting Delicacies, sweeter than Hony, and the Hony-Comb : But sinning against my God, was blinded, and lost those Dainties ; so that I am now forced to take up with the Husks of this World.

And with so much the more greediness is my Heart poured out toward Earthly Delights, according as it is farther driven from its inmost Ground, where only the true Joy and Rest is to be met with.

Nevertheless, if I but turn at any time into my self, I find there quickly how wofully I am cheated ; and that I am not to be accounted happy in these created things, whatever I may foolishly imagine. For I am truly encompassed and filled with many Adversities, and manifold Dolours ; and am set in so great Anguish, and am so frequently bowed down with Sorrow, as I cannot tell what to choose, or what I ought to do.

I am straighten'd hence exceedingly betwixt two ; and which to prefer before the other, I discern very slowly, if at all. As for those things that are *above* me, my desire is that they may come to me ; and these are not always at hand : As for those that God hath put *below* me, I wish that they may depart from me ; and these will abide with me uninvited and unwelcome.

They come flocking to me apace, and therewith sundry and manifold Cogitations ; some of these from the World, others from the Flesh, more from the Devil : And surrounding me about on all sides, they say, "*We are thy Bone, and thy Flesh* ; Let us tarry a little with thee ; Consent thou to us ; Be thou our Friend, and sit thou here also among us.

With

With their Compliments and great Promises thus they craftily lie in wait for me; and on the other side, with their Threats and Terrors, and various Events of Evil, they strive also to afflict and terrifie my Soul.

C H A P. XII.

The Efficacy of Divine Grace and Consolation.

AND I, for as much as I am a Mortal Man, and weak, alas! To resist, do not as I ought contradict the Persuasions and Importunities of these my disguised Enemies.

If I should do as they persuade, it is certain that I am cheated; for as much as they speak with all deceitfulness. For such a Persuasion as this haling me to run after the created things, can no wise be of God, but of the wicked One.

For they that are Born of God resist the Devil, and he fleeth from them. And as for them that bear an hatred to the World, and to the things that are therein, there is nothing in their way can stop or retard them.

Also, they that are wise in God believe not every Spirit; but are used to try all things, and to examine well whether the Spirit be of God, or of the World.

They indeed hear, but they consent not; saying, *We know not whence ye are: Or, Depart, for ye are of the Devil your Father; and the truth is not in you.*

Such as this is the Conflict of the Godly: And the Lord, who regards all things, knows how great the Labour and Exercise of all their Temptations is.

This Life is full of Dolours and Pressures, as they very well know, who have drunk of the Cup of its Bitterness.

Therefore

Therefore it is that the Mind of Man seeks whence it may be refreshed : But all Comfort is vain, without the Benefit of the Divine. Daily Experience instructs how fallacious all Earthly Hope is ; and it shall infallibly turn to Bitterness, whatever he seeks besides or without God, in this time of his Pilgrimage.

C H A P. XIII.

The Subjection of the Flesh to the Spirit.

WO is me, that my Habitation is set afar off ! and that there is not any such thing in this Life, as wherein my Soul can safely take up its Rest !

All and each of my Members say unto me : “ O do
“ not weary thy self for nought ; For as much as thou
“ shalt consume away before it will be possible for thee
“ to be satiated with these Earthly Things.

My Spirit also, which is always craving for the best, sweetest, and most delicious Food, then accosts
“ me, and says : “ I will return into my House, from
“ whence I came out ; for it was better for me *then*
“ than it is *now* : Yea, I even feel a Nauseousness
“ and Loathing in all those things which are pre-
“ sented me from without.

But would to God, O my Flesh, that thou would’st hear this Voice ; and, neglecting thine own Prudence, would’st emulate the Spirit : This, without all doubt, would be the way for thee to find Life, and to avoid Everlasting Death.

Necessary it is however, that thou pay a Temporal Debt, because in the first Prevarication thou standest condemned. And hence thou wilt do discreetly, if thou submit thy self with all Gentleness to the Spirit, and make not thy self a Rebel against the same : That
so

so the second Death may not touch thee, and thou may'st have Admission into that everlasting Sabbath of Rest, which thou chiefly lovest.

C H A P. XIV.

The Body how a Partner with the Soul Here and Hereafter.

FOLLOW therefore me, saith the Spirit of Jesus, and grieve no longer thy Spirit by lusting against it; but rather be thou ready for all things, which it commandeth thee. I say unto thee, if thou shalt be Partaker with it of Tribulation, thou shalt be also Partaker of its Consolation.

Cover thy self with Ashes and Sackcloth, descend thou, and sit in the Dust, O Daughter of Sion. Lament with me, for I am not well; and my Grief is neither small, nor Momentary.

My God and my Lord is angry with his Servant, and he has cursed his Works, and said, *In the Sweat of thy Brow shalt thou eat thy Bread*: And I confess, that hence I have justly lost the desirable Land, for that I have not kept the Commandment of my God.

Before I fell hither, my Food was not Animal, Terrestrial and Corporeal; but Heavenly, Angelical and Spiritual.

It was Bread of the finest Wheat Flower, even out of the Rock, which my God had prepared for me; but that which I have now, is as it were of wild Grain, is both coarse and mouldy. And if also I should say that it is baked *under the Ashes*, and never turned, I should speak herein nought but the Truth.

C H A P. XV.

The Tears of an exile Soul bemoaning her Captivity.

Right well, therefore do I deplore my Estate, and expose my Grief, which I have conceived concerning the Banishment, wherein I was born; and my Loss, which I sustain in a strange Land, even a strange and a foreign Country to me.

Lament together, ye Children of Men, and weep over your selves ye Children of *Adam*, who do eat Ashes as it were Bread, and have changed the Heavenly for the Earthly Food. And, O Unhappy and Blind Children, what have ye lost!

But because ye know it not, therefore ye weep not in the least, and therein are ye the more to be wept for, and lamented. For by reason that your so great Misery is not seen of you, thence is it so exceeding great and deplorable.

Look upon me, O all ye that walk by, and behold what Delights I am deprived of, and what great Evils I am hedged about with. Look upon my Desolations, and see how I am as cut off from the glorious Land of the Living, to live an Exile here in this Valley among mortal Shadows.

I labour now in this present Life, and Night and Day do I breath after that eternal Banquet, where none is athirst, but all drink Wine out of the Cup of Salvation chearfully and abundantly; even the Wine which cheareth and clarifieth the Hearts of the Saints, without overturning or disordering the Mind. O who will give me to drink hereof?

There is none, alas! To give me a draught of this Celestial *Wine*. Hardly is there so much as one little Cup of that Salutary *Water*, which so overflows in the Heavenly Kingdoms and Mansions of Glory, to be

be here obtained by me a poor Supplicant. Heaven is shut against me, and the Earth giveth not her Fruit, but bringeth forth to me Thorns and Thistles; and ye say unto me, Why weepest thou? Why eatest thou, and drinkest thou not?

Ye Children of Men, how long will ye be dull of Heart? How long relish ye such things? Will ye never be wiser? And wherefore afflict ye my Heart, speaking to me Foolishness?

Ye have no Portion in the Word of the Lord, and ye seek to subvert that which is just with a lying Promise, saying, *Peace, Peace, and there is no Peace.* What have you to do with Peace? *There is no Peace to the Wicked, saith the Lord.*

As for me, the Reason why I weep is not because I am not Rich, or because I do not abound with Wine and Bread, Corn and Oil, from the outward Principle, as ye seek to abound: But because I am in the World, and do not see *Him* yet, who is the true Peace, and the chief and only real Blessedness.

Look upon my Sore, and handle my Wounds; and if with me ye have no mind to weep, let me alone, that I may lament a little by my self, and pour out my Grief before I go hence and return not again.

C H A P. XVI.

*The earnest Longing of the devout Soul after
Dissolution.*

I Will sit me down in the mean while mourning; I will go on sorrowful, sowing in Tears; I will hide my self from the World; I will not go abroad, but will die in my little Nest, and will be buried in my Grave which I have dug for my self.

And mighty glad am I that I have found a Sepulchre, that so I may sleep therein, and may not see the Evils upon the Earth. My Soul is verily tired out with my Life, and my Grief is renewed every Day.

Wherefore, I beg, O my Lord God, that thou wouldest absolve and loose me from every Bond of Sin, and snatch me away from the Earth, because Death is better to me than Life.

Since what shall I do here more? For Days upon Days, Months upon Months, Years upon Years slide away: And yet thy Servant still all this while is not much Improved, by all the Experiences that I have hitherto had, and by all the Assistances of thy good Spirit following me continually.

O do not thou longer protract, and hold in expectation thy unworthy Servant: Nor suffer him longer to wander after the Vanity of this Life.

I have gone astray like a Sheep that is lost: O seek thy Servant, Lord, for it is time. It is not my Righteousness, nor my Godness, O Lord: But it is thy Mercy and Gentleness, which cannot be measured, that maketh this Claim.

According to this do unto thy Servant, and visit me with thy Salvation, that I may live in the Goodness of thy Saints, which is thy Goodness; and rejoice in the Joy of thy Nation, even *Thy* Joy: So to praise thee with thine Inheritance, which thou hast purchased with thy most precious Blood, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost abidest God Blessed for ever.

C H A P. XVII.

The Penitent's Progress after this in the Resigned and Lowly Life of Christ.

N Evertheless bow down thy self, O my Soul, to the most Holy and Righteous Will of GOD, even *Thy God*, with all chearfulness; whatsoever he may please to determine concerning thee, or to make the Term of thy Probation here long or short. If it be his Pleasure, that thou shouldest continue in the Wilderness of this Earth a Pilgrim, and an Exile yet many Days; repine not at what thou here sufferest, according to his most Wise Dispensation, and most just and gracious Order; but entirely submit thy self, and be in all things content and pleased: But if it be his good Will and Pleasure, rather to deliver thee soon out of the miseries of this sinful World, and to translate thee Home; be thou also pleased, and see thou dream not away the little remainder of thy Time, how little thou knowest not, but with all diligence get thy self ready for thy Journey; trim thy Lamp, and go thou forth to meet thy Bridegroom, that so he may embrace thee in his Arms, and lead thee into the Bride-Chamber, where thou mayst for ever enjoy his Presence.

Bow down thy self, O my Soul, in most meek and lowly Resignation: For, lo! Thy Lord cometh unto thee, yea the Lord thy King cometh, who is *Meek and Lowly*. O be thou also like unto him: Bow, bow thy self before his Majesty, and prostrate adore the King of *Humility* and King of *Glory*. Stoop, my Soul, humbly and of thine own Accord to GOD; who must stoop, whether thou wilt or no. Make haste to cast thy self down at his Footstool, with deepest Self-Abasement: So will he lift thee up, and delight in thee;

thee ; beholding there his own most lovely and beloved Image of *Humility of Heart*.

Learn of me, saith he, who is thy supream Master and Law-giver, *For I am Meek and Lowly in Heart*. O that I could but learn this one Lesson well, then need I not fear ! O how do I long to learn this dear Lesson, this Lesson of Lessons, my Blessed Jesu ! Which whosoever shall heed and observe, will soon by it arrive to very great Perfection ; and without which no other Lesson can avail ought, because he labours in vain, who strives to know any thing without Humility, or begins not with this in Christ's School. For this is verily the *First Lesson* of Christ, thy sweetest Saviour, even Poverty of *Spirit* and Lowliness of *Heart* : which is as the Foundation of all Virtue, and most absolutely and indispensably necessary to arrive at eternal Salvation.

Wherefore if any one desire to have either Grace now, or Blessedness of Life hereafter, let him give good heed to this sacred and salutary Lesson : But whoever is negligent in this, whatever he may do or think, he is certain to mar all, and to lose all. Would to God therefore that every one might learn thoroughly the Doctrine of *Christ* (even this Fundamental Doctrine) that bears the Name of *Christian* : And that all Sorts and Conditions of Men professing his Holy Name and Religion whether of the Clergy or Layety, whether Princes or Subjects, Noble or Simple, Rich or Poor, Learned or Unlearned, might be universally disciplin'd according to it, and well instructed and enured in it, as in the Royal Way, which the King of Saints has chalked out for us by his own Example ! For thou, O Christ, teachest not the things that are High, but that are Lowly ; not those that are Vain, but them that are Profitable ; not the False, but the True ; not the Earthly, but the Heavenly.

He

He therefore will in a short while be both Learned and Blessed, who shall *humbly* imitate Thee, following thy Steps in Poverty and Resignation of Heart. For thou knowest, O my Soul, that Humility is the singular and darling Vertue of Christ : And that who-soever shall be conformed to him therein, shall thereby also be conformed to him in Glory. It is the Favourite of thy Saviour's Heart : Most opposite to the Devil, most contrary to the World.

Ah me ! Could I but possess in Heart and Deed this most precious Grace, then should I please the Majesty of God, delight my Redeemer Christ, make his Angels rejoice, and secure my Passage out of this World : Since he my Redeemer liveth who hath said so, and since it is the *first* Blessing that was by him pronounced from the Mount of his Law, viz. *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* Hence without this Poverty and Humility of Spirit I see that there can be no Salvation ; and that without it there is no Vertue, nor Action accepted of God, how bright soever it may appear. All Labour, let it be never so great, or let it be of never so long Continuance, doth without this signify mere nothing : All Vigilance is vain and fruitless without it ; but with it the End never fails of being obtain'd. For profound Humility keeps the Castle of all the Virtues, and triumphs always over the Enemies.

Wouldest thou not be afraid of thine Adversary the Devil ? Humble thy self, O my Soul : For Humility of it self alone escapes all the Devil's Snares, defeats all his Devices, and tramples on his Power. As many as have been deceived, and thrown down as from the Pinnacle of the Church, have fallen by being puffed up in the Haughtinesses of their Minds :

Be thou therefore humble, O my Soul, and Vile in thine own Eyes, lest thou displease God, and tumble thy self down headlong with the Father of Pride.

For Heaven receives none but the Humble, God chooseth none but the Humble, Christ approves as Righteous none but the Humble.

C H A P. XVIII.

His Humiliation hereupon: And proposal of Christ both for a Pattern and a Standard.

Bow down thy self therefore, O my Soul, deeply under God, and under every Creature for the sake of God. Again and again, I say, *Bow, bow*. Make thy self least, yea the very least of all, in thine own Heart: Neither esteem thy self so much as worthy to enjoy the common Light of this World; for as much as thou hast through thy Sins grievously offended God, most justly provoking his holy Indignation against thee, so as utterly to have destroyed thee; had not the Bowels of his Mercy in Jesus thy Saviour interposed for thee, and raised thee up.

For this be thou humbled to the Dust submitting thy self wholly and at all times to his Will, depending upon his Mercy alone, and purposing by his Grace to serve and please Him from this very Hour ever hereafter, in all newness of Life. And with Prayers and Tears, in Faith and Humility, come thou before his Mercy-Seat, the Throne of Grace in the Heavens; and thus address thy self to the great High Priest in the Celestial Sanctuary, that he may carry the Petitions of thy Heart, and offer them up to the Father, who bears thy Name upon his Breast, even upon his Heart.

O Lord Jesu Christ, the True, Eternal and Immutable Light, who to enlighten the Darkness of Human Ignorance, didst vouchsafe to descend into the Prison

of this World; that thou mightest shew unto us the Way to our Native Country of Everlasting Clarity and Glory, where thou art always present to the Holy Angels and Blessed Saints, and shinest ever in thy full Lustre, without any interposing Cloud or Mist: Bow down thine Ear, and listen to the Prayers of my Lowliness; and so infuse into my Heart, of thy gracious Liberality, that *Deifying Light* which thou hast preached to the World, and hast commanded to be preached to all Nations throughout the Earth; as I may know and understand in the Land of my Pilgrimage *Thy Way*, so far as abandoning the Vanity of the World, and rejecting all Carnal Cares and Concerns, I may with the steps of Love *follow* Thee, my Creator and Redeemer, even to the last Passage and Exit of my Life; in all Poverty and Humility; in all Patience and Long-suffering; in all Faith, Hope and Charity; in all Sobriety, Chastity and Obedience.

For thou art the Mirror of Life, and the Light of all Holiness, O Lord Christ; who hast gone before me in the Way of Virtue, that thou mightest thereby reduce me, who was involved in many Errors and Sins, to the Knowledge of the Truth. Thou hast proposed thy self to me for an Example of Living, that so if I might not be altogether so well satisfied to Imitate some one of the Saints, at least I might have nothing to object against Imitating and Following Thee, my Lord and my God. And that I might not judge this to be impossible, thou hast left me many Thousand Examples of thy Saints, who have zealously traced thy Steps, and ardently followed thee in the Regeneration. These may be the *Patterns* unto me, *so far* as they were Followers of thee, and walked with thy humble Majesty in the Valley of the Lillies; but they cannot be my *Standard*: Whereas
thou,

thou, O Christ, art not only the *Christian's Pattern*, but his *Standard* too.

Give therefore unto me, most loving *Jesu*, the Fervour of thy Spirit: Kindle in me that Fire, which thou camest to send into the World, that so I may despise all these low and trifling Things, and may desire with all my Heart to live unto Thee alone, may study to please Thee alone, and may not be afraid of being slighted and neglected for thy sake, and the Love of thy Name. Be thou my Joy, my only Joy, O thou sweetness of my Soul: Dwell thou with me, and let me dwell with thee; Let us dwell together Thou and I, shutting out for this end all the World.

O most sweet most ineffable Society! Abide, I pray thee, with me now, and permit me never to leave thee more. Be thou to me my Teacher and my Master, my Learning and my Wisdom, dearest *Jesu*. Be thou henceforth to me continually the Standard and the Rule of Life: Be thou the Beginning and the End of my Way. Following thee, I cannot err: Beholding thee constantly, I shall not matter the Speeches or Arguments of such as would withdraw me back. Let all Labour seem to me little for thee, all Adversity light, and all whatever is Heavy be made tolerable, yea, more than tolerable. Let thy Love, O Lord, which overcometh all things, and which maketh us to overcome all things also, grant me these things which I now ask of thee, to the Honour and Glory of thy Name. And may Humility of Heart still follow, which fulfilling all things, yet accounts not as if she had done any thing.

C H A P. XIX.

Farther Aspirations of a Contrite Soul after the Life of Christ.

THou art my Expectation, and the fulfilling of my Desire, O Lord Christ: Thou art my Recreation, and the Illumination of my Heart, who never forsakest them that hope in thee: However thou sufferest them to be tempted for an *hour*, that they may know themselves better, and be mindful how that they are not able to do any thing without thee.

O my Faithful and All-happy Friend, the Lover of returning Prodigals, take me so unto thee, whensoever thou shalt perceive my Affections to be either press'd down at any time with the Weight or Burthen of Sin, or held or detain'd with the unnecessary Affairs of the World: That I may not wander again, running far astray from thee, after the swarm of vain or wicked Imaginations, and so be depriv'd of thy Grace; without which preventing and assisting me, I see, I am never able to effect the least Good Thing, or to enjoy thy Love.

O Jesu! The true Life of every one that trusteth in thee; give me Grace, that, through thy Love abiding in me, I may henceforward live unto thee, as one dead to the World; and that I may so speak, so think, and so behold the things that are *without*, as tho' they were not. *For the things which are seen are temporal, and vain: But the things which are not seen are eternal, and unchangeable.*

Now he that is dead to the World, is not in the World, but in God, to whom he lives. And therefore if I am yet truly dead unto the World, then is my *Life hid with thee*, O Christ, *in God*. O that thou would'st turn in unto me, and at once shew thy self
to

to me, and to my self; not as in a Glimpse transiently, but fully and permanently: For thou truly art my Life, my Felicity, and my sole Delight.

O my only Beloved Jesu! Leave me not to my self in the Banishment of this World; but as thou hast said, and promised, even so do thou with me: And if thou art pleased to withdraw for a little while, make then no long tarrying, but come again in a seasonable hour; till, the term of my Probation being finished, and I utterly dead to the World, but alive unto thee, thou may'st take me to thy self into thy everlasting Glory, wherein thou livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, blessed for ever.

C H A P. XX.

The Necessity of a Daily Death towards the Attainment of this Life.

THE Glorious Apostle St. Paul, whose Life was thus *hid in God*, through perfect Mortification to the World, teacheth me in like manner to lay my corrupt Life, saying, *Reckon your selves to be dead unto Sin [and the World,] but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* And again, in another place he says, *If we be dead with him, we shall live with him.* Whence I conclude, that such a Death to the World and Sin is of most absolute necessity; and that in every thing I ought to deny, forsake, and conquer my self for the sake of Christ, who for me both died, and rose again from the Dead; that I might be even as He, and where He is.

Alas, how often dieth my Soul for the Creatures which she loveth! Ah, how many a time is she, forgetting

getting her Creator and Saviour, carried away for their sakes ! Ah, wretched Man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from this Death, and bring me to that other Death, whereby alone I can be said to enjoy Life ?

In the *Life* of my Lord, I find the perfect Meditation of my self, according to the Affection of Nature, and the Inclination of Sensuality, which must be kept with Bit and Bridle. I find also in the Death of my Lord a certain Spiritual and Internal Life full of Grace and of all Virtues, with which I do rise again from all perishing Things, and from all Creaturely Adhesions without or within me, of what nature or sort soever.

And when I stand naked and free of all things, and do remain unfill'd and unpossess'd, then do I go forward indeed to my Heavenly Country with Christ : Nor doth any thing then delight me, nor any outward Solace or Comfort find me Recreation ; but only the Union of my Soul with Christ my Lord, his Glory, and to be with this my Lord. Whom I desire to be the very Life of my Life, now and ever.

O how happy to me is this Death, which opens to me the Gate of Everlasting Life ! The Blessed Apostle and Evangelist of his Bosom, heard an Heavenly Voice saying to him, *Blessed are the Dead, who die in the Lord.* And who are those that *die in the Lord*, if not those who are first dead to the World, and crucified to the Flesh ? And why, or how are they *Blessed*, but that *from henceforth, saith the Spirit, they may rest from their Labours* ? O what a most Heavenly Word is this ! Lo ! Here is the true Rest from our Labours attained ; herein is the unutterable Peace of Mind found, and the sweet secret Consolation of the Spirit arising out of the most perfect Disentanglement from the World, and Disengagement from the Flesh.

Now if he who as touching the Flesh is dead, neither speaks, nor smells, nor tastes, nor regards any curious and beautiful things; then so it ought to be with thee in like manner, O my Soul, if so be that thou art thoroughly mortified to the World, and to thine own corrupt Nature, as thou standest in Union with a Body of Sin.

But, alas! I fear, that thou art not yet perfectly dead to the World, so as to live in Christ: But that the *Old Man* after all is still alive in thee, raising up within thee much Contention, and Desires of manifold Evils. Hence thou art affected with the Praises and Reproaches of Men; which ought not to move thee at all: And hence also, are thy Days tedious to thee, and thy Nights bitter, that is, even because thou art not yet come to Rest from thy Solitudes and Labours as thou oughtest, but art still too much in the Multiplicity of thy own Thoughts.

Whereas the true internal Peace and Sabbath of the Soul is never to be found, unless a Man be first wholly disentangled from the Earth and Earthly Objects, and be spiritually dead to himself and to the World.

Neither is it enough to be *once* Dead; but here the Christian Soul must dispose her *self* to die *daily*.

For every Day must I resolve to be ready and willing to dye for Christ, and to begin my Life anew, even as if I had never begun hitherto; and to prepare my self for Suffering and Dying, and for the Conquest of Self. Nay at all times, and in all Places, every Hour and every Minute, I ought to endeavour to go forth out of my self, and to leave my self thoroughly and perfectly for CHRIST, and in the Love of him to deny and annihilate my own Love to my self.

Since so much do I gain as I lose for Christ; and so much do I advance forward, as I go out of my self.

Where I forsake my self, there I find my self; where I seek my self, there I undo my self; and where I look but to my own private Interest, there am I sure always to hurt my self, and to do the greatest Difference there, where I would Serve most.

C H A P. XXI.

A Lamentation of the Soul for her Infirmary and Unsteadfastness in the Christian Race.

IN many things, alas! I am yet to die. Ah! Many Deaths, I see, there are to be passed through, as I am passing this Vale of Sin and Death. Now according to the Spirit I am indeed most willing to submit hereto; but my Flesh is weak; nor is it only weak, but rebellious too.

I must hence frequently do that which I would not do, and often leave that undone, which I would fain have done. And in these things is my Conflict; but then in these also doth my Victory consist.

Blessed is the Man, who knoweth how in all things to forsake and break himself; for he shall receive a Crown of Life from God. Human Rewards are all vile and inconsiderable; and as for their Duration it passeth away in a Moment; but with God nothing can be lost, either in Time, or in Eternity.

Very fain would I tarry with my Beloved Lord, let him deal with me as it pleaseth him. For if I have done amiss, lo; He is ready to forgive; and if I have done well, he is ready to reward the Work of his own Grace in his Servant.

O Beloved Jesu, vouchsafe me this Favour, because I am nothing. Well may I complain of my self, and greatly bewail and lament my self; because when I
rightly

rightly reflect and consider, I my self alone am all that which hindreth and weigheth me down.

I confesse therefore to GOD that it is my own, yea my own Fault: I acknowledge before him my daily Deviations, even after his Grace who had laid hold on me, and the Cords of his Love had drawn me. O that my gracious Father would now cast a merciful Eye upon my Imprisonment and my Thralldom, as at the beginning! That he would so lighten all the obscure Places of my Heart, as that I might discern at all times the Path in which I am to walk!

O Lord my God, most gracious and holy, what will become of me in the end; seeing I make no greater Advancement in my spiritual Race, after all the Assistances of thy Grace; which I have most freely received from thee, and all the Attractions of thy Holy Spirit, which I daily feel? O when will it be better with thy poor Servant? When shall he be able to run after thee, O Christ, and there be nothing to stop him? Fain would I be set at liberty from what shackles me down to the Earth, if it were thy good Pleasure to break all my Snares in sunder, for then would I run and leap in the Ways which thou, Lord, hast appointed unto me, both by thy Precept and Example.

I must own and confesse that I am in the Fault only, in that I have not so freely and fully concurred with the Drawings of thy Grace and Wisdom, as I ought to have done. Wherefore I will humble my self yet more deeply.

And so much the more as I humble and despise my self for being the Impediment and Obstacle to thy gracious Motions, so much the more easily do I arrive at both Remission of Sin and Increase of Grace: And do overcome every Burthen, by bearing it together with Christ's Burthen.

C H A P. IX.

The Yoak of Christ Sweet to the true Penitent.

IT is blessed thing for thee, O my Soul, that thou art come at length under the Yoak of Christ; for there is no Burthen but will be made light to thee, as thou faithfully abidest under it: And therefore seek not to shift it from thy self to another. For what will it profit me to impose my Weight or Burthen upon another? If I am in the right, it is good for me to hold my Peace, and to bear quietly, since much Complaining will never better me. If I am in the wrong, then it is better to yield early than late.

O Beloved Jesu, help me to carry my Burthen, for without thee thou seest that I can do nothing. Thou art my most faithful Friend and best Helper, whenever any Necessity presents it self. It is hence both my Interest and Duty, that committing my self to thee in Peace, I permit all things to pass over me; and that I evenly bear both what is just and what is unjust; and with a generous Unconcernedness of Mind leave my self wholly to thy Conduct, under all the sundry and various Events of thy most wise Providence. Whence though it be often very grievous and irksom to Nature, I am resolved notwithstanding to resign my self, thy Grace herein assisting me, and to sacrifice my Will upon thy Altar, O God: For as much as in this Life there must quickly be an end both of Joy and Lamentation; and all then will be as a Shadow that is passed.

Blessed is he who waits in Faith for the fulfilling of the divine Promises, and permits God to deal with him always in all things, as his Majesty shall see most convenient and suitable, without any Election or seeking of his own. O how Blessed is the Man that is in

such a Case! O sweet Burthen! O easy and pleasant Yoak of my Jesus! Blessed and Magnified be thou, O Lord my Saviour, for having called me to this State by thy Grace; there being nothing greater or better that I can wish for here, than a Life of Faith and Dependence, such as this, whereby I become entirely thy Care.

C H A P. XXIII.

His Thankfulness in all Estates.

I Thank thee, O LORD, for every Burthen or outward Evil, as well as for every Good, outward and inward, which I receive at thy Hands, who am most unworthy of the latter; for lo! I am less than the least of all thy Mercies, and nothing is there in me, that should any wise attract thee, or cause thee to be favourable and gracious. I thank thee, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, both for one and for the other in like manner: And my Soul praiseth and adoreth thee as well for the heaviest Load of Affliction, which thou for my Trial dost at any time lay upon me; as for the smallest Drop of true Ghostly Consolation, which thy Majesty is pleased sometimes to dispense towards me for my Support and Encouragement, while I am walking through this Vale of Tears.

Praised be thou, and Blessed, for every Suffering which I suffer *for* and *with* thee! Praised be thou, and for ever Blessed, for every Comfort which I have at any time felt, wherein thou hast comforted me in the House of Sorrow and Bondage! All Praise, all Glory, all Love be unto Thee, my God and my King.

I am often most surprisingly deliver'd, even in an Instant, from the most heavy Pressures and Calamities which bind me down ; and then again strait it is thy good Pleasure to exercise me afresh, and so I have enough given me to bear ; for there is a continual Vicissitude for me in this mortal and shadowy State of my Being, and nothing *under the Sun* is durable. O that my Soul were therefore so clothed with Thee, O *Sun* of Righteousness, as I needed no more fear the Shadows ! And so as I might live in thy Light for evermore, without Danger either of Setting, or of being Eclipsed !

Thus far the matter is here come: So it hath been hitherto, and so it will still go on. To suffer in this World none shall ever want, wheresoever he may be, or whatsoever he may have. Blessed be GOD ; as for me, I have well deserved to suffer, and rightly to me doth it appertain indeed to be afflicted and slighted.

Help me, dearest Jesu, that I may so follow the Example of thy holy Patience, as I fail not of attaining the good End of my present Sojourning here ; and dispose the Way of me thy poor Servant in all things, so as may be most for the Honour and Praise of thy Name.

Yet sometimes I know not what to say, or think: Alas ! When I consider mine own Infirmary I am utterly gone. I hope however, yea I hope firmly, that yet all will be better with me: Notwithstanding that for the present, Matters seem to go so uneven, and so contrary. Upon what can I confide, unless upon thy Mercy, O my Beloved Lord, who art my only Refuge, and the God of my Hope.

C H A P. XXIV.

The Narrow Path of perfect Mortification.

WHat avails then all Humane Comfort, when thou, Lord, forsakeſt me? Or what can hinder me when thou aſſiſteſt me? But thou art often at a diſtance from me, or art at leaſt hidden. Ah! I cannot conſide in any Comfort, or in any delightful Senſation of my Heart: Since I am frequently deprived of all before I know it, or have time to make any Reflection upon it.

And here it is needful for me that I again learn to dye to Self, even with reſpect to theſe; and that I deny all inward Conſolations, and that I lay down my Will in the Will of my Lord; and that I ſtudy to endure quietly my Banishment, my Preſſure, and my Obſcurity, until it ſhall pleaſe him graciously to have Pity upon me his poor Creature, and to comfort me.

I muſt wait for the Grace of God, and help my ſelf with true inward Poverty, and conſider ſoberly how that I am not worth one Mite. Nothing there is that I can make any Pretence or Claim to: God is the Beginning, and God is the End of all the Goods either of Grace or Nature. It is he that of a ſudden maketh Rich, and maketh Poor: He both cooleth and inflameth; he it is that liſteth up, and that caſteth down; that exalteth, and again deprefſeth; that illuſtrateth, and that cloudeth; doing many wonderful things inwardly and ſecretly in the Soul of the true Penitent, which are no wiſe eaſy to be declared.

Ah my Beloved Jeſu! Do thou with me as it ſeemeth beſt to thee; becauſe I do not thoroughly, and in the ground, underſtand my ſelf. Unto thee alone is known what is moſt profitable for me. I commit
my

my self to thee, deal thou with me according to thy most dear and precious Will.

When there is ought that withstands, it is presently perceived ; for Restlessness and Disquiet of Heart, thence springing, are not delightful to be born, but grievous. But whence is all this? It is not from thy self? Yea verily.

Every Impediment and every Perturbation cometh from ones own seeking. Nature always seeks those things which are her own, after divers manners, both within and without, both in great and in small ; and is most hard to be brought to be willing to die, and to deny her self. Nevertheless die she must, and be wholly conquered, that the Spirit may be at rest, and be united with Christ.

O my beloved Lord ! Make me Partaker of thy Grace, and desert me not in my Necessities ; for I have many things yet to hope for. For I have not yet thoroughly and fundamentally forsaken my self ; nor am totally dead to my self ; nor am I loosed and emptied of all created things ; nor am I got rid of all base and sensitive Affections, which either clip the Wings of the Soul, or cling to them like Birdlime : But Nature lives yet strongly in me, giving me to understand, that the * *Jebusite* (that is, the Fuel of Sin) is yet in the Land, or the *Earth* (that is, in my Earthly Body, or *Flesh*.) Be kind yet unto me, dear Lord, for thy Grace's sake : O do good unto thy Servant, because of thy tender Mercies ; for in thy Strength do all my Enemies presently fall to nothing. With one only Word, and in the Twink of an Eye, all are scatter'd before thee, O Lord.

* This is grounded on *Deut.* xx. 17. *Josh.* xv. 63. and 2 *Sam.* v. 8. Compared with the Apostle's Reasoning, *Gal.* iv. 22.—30. and *Rom.* vii. 17.

C H A P. XXV.

Against the false Rests of the Soul in the Work of Conversion.

HOWever, it is highly incumbent on me to stand always in Awe, and never to trust to my self; for though I am often pluck'd out of the Gin, and deliver'd, yet am I not therefore at all secure. I can trust to no manner of Relish, nor to any Gusts or Sensations, nor to any Convenience or Interest, nor to any Comfort or Solace; but merely and solely to thy Mercy alone, O sweet and merciful Lord.

Without thee I am a Burthen and a Clog to my very self: But with thee, and in thee, I am made firm and free; and may be said to be my own Man, by being thine. I cannot set my Heart upon any Thing or Place, howsoever Beautiful it may be; for as much as all is transitory, that is look'd after Without: All is unstable and insecure, in Men, in Things, in Houses, in Colleges, in Monasteries, and Seats of Religious Retirement and Enclosure; and every where there is found defect, contrariety and resistance, in one or in another; and every thing in this present State that occurs, of what nature or sort soever it may be, is altogether an occasion to the Soul of making it suffer, and be pressed down, both from within and without. For when Suffering comes, it helps not, how adorn'd and pleasant soever the Place be, or what and how many Goods there be possessed.

He that knows well how to behave himself in Poverty, and with regard to it, that accounts it best to suffer for God, and always desires rather more than less, he shall obtain a greater Peace, and an higher Joy with God. When ought Temporal is loved too much, Internal Peace cannot long be kept. With a
simple

simple Eye and with a pure Heart all things are to be look'd upon; and you must take heed, that the Things or Objects, by you consider'd, be not consider'd with any sensual Delight or Pleasure; for so shall a Man abide without hurt, and pure in Conscience. To be preferr'd before all things of the World, and even before all the Joys of Heaven, is the Will of God. Which God grant us. *Amen.*

The Prayer of an Humble Penitent.

O Most merciful God, whose Nature is goodness, and whose Work is Mercy, grant me, according to the multitude of thy Mercies, to have a perfect Contrition for my Sins, that being pricked at the Heart with true internal Sorrow, I may most bitterly lament the same, and in the sacred Laver of Repentance, be thoroughly washed and cleansed, to the Honour of thy Grace. Let me, I beseech thee, be armed with a Zeal of Justice against my self, that I may even rise up with Indignation, as against a Villain or High-way-man; for that I have most grievously offended thee, my God, and have not rendered thee the Honour due to thee; but often attributing something (at least) of Good to my self, have therein done most vilely, most basely, most ungratefully; I have grievously wounded my Soul with the poisonous Darts of Sin, and by easily yielding to the Temptations of the Flesh, have quenched and slain the Spirit. Wherefore, O Lord, Righteous Judge, strong and patient, give me such a due Compunction and hearty Contrition, as the Heinousness of my Sins requires. And do thou rather punish and correct me in this present Life, than reserve my Evils for the Judgment to come. O God, most Gracious, most Pitiful, most Clement, have mercy upon me, an unworthy Sinner, who for the sake of Sinners and the Unrighteous, camest into the World, and gavest thy self a Ransom for the worst of Sinners, even for me. Help me therefore, O God my Saviour, and for the Glory of thy Name deliver me. *Amen.*

OF

O F T H E
 I M I T A T I O N
 O F
 J e s u s C h r i s t.

The Second Book.

A short Christian Directory:
 Digested into Conferences betwixt an Old
 Christian and a Novice, or the Master
 and the Disciple.

C H A P. I.

Of seeking Good and shunning Evil Company.

The Master.

He that walketh with the Wise shall be Wise : But a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed, (or broken) Prov. xiii.

I. **A**ttend with diligence, Beloved in Christ,
 and take good heed continually, lest thou
 be seduced by Vicious, Dissolute, or Care-
 less Company. converse with such as are
 Virtuous and Learned ; and with them that keep good



M. V. Gucht Sculp:

Book 4^e. 2^d. Audiens Sapiens Sapientior crit



Orders and Discipline make thy self familiar : Since with the *Holy* thou shalt learn to be *Holy* ; but with the *Perverse* thou shalt learn *Perverseness*. More particularly therefore accompany thy self with, and cleave close to some one Person, of well approved Piety and Experience, that is, a strict Observer of Rules, yet not affecting to be thought so ; from whom thou may'st always hear some good Discourse, such as may be both Comfortable and Edifying, and at once delightful to the Ear, and worthy thy Imitation. For even as a dead Coal by touching of Fire becomes thereby Hot and Burning ; so a Lukewarm Christian in like manner associating himself with one that is Fervent and Devout, catches fire, and becomes himself Fervent and Devout too ; and is greatly both instructed and regulated.

2. The Apostles, by adhering to Christ, were made Holy Men, and filled with the Holy Ghost. St. *Mark*, joining himself with St. *Peter*, was made learned in the sacred Gospel, which he heard from him with great Joy. *Timothy*, accompanying himself with St. *Paul*, was instructed in Holy Writ, even from his Youth ; and afterwards, profiting in the Grace of God, was ordained of him Bishop of *Ephesus*, and no less beloved of him than an only Son is of a dear and tender Father. *Polycarp*, by conversing with St. *John* the Apostle, became a zealous Preacher of the Faith unto the People, and a famous Martyr with Holy *Ignatius*. St. *Austin* being instructed by St. *Ambrose*, became at length a glorious Doctor of the Church, and hath obtained an honourable Mention and Esteem throughout the whole World, even unto this very Day. And so was sweet St. *Bernard*, by adhering to a certain holy and venerable old Man, called *Stephen*, made the Light of Religion, and as it were a bright Star shining in Heaven. Hereof there are many Instances both Modern and Ancient,

Very

Very many thus are the Examples, both new and old, to every one known, which demonstrate how Beneficial to the Soul good Company is, and how Prejudicial on the contrary the bad is. Good Reading profiteth; Evil Hearing hurteth: Solitude, with Silence is good; but Tumult, with extravagant Wandering, will be no wise agreeable. Be therefore either alone with God, waiting upon Him, in the performance of thy Duty; or else with a Devout Companion, discoursing of Christ, and conferring of the Graces and Virtues which did so supereminently adorn his most Holy Life. But moreover, take heed not to search too curiously into things too high for thee; study to make thy self acquainted well in the first place with thy Faults; and learn next to apply proper Remedies to the Diseases.

C H A P. V.

Of forsaking the World, and Snares of the Devil.

The Master and Disciple.

A Wise Man by hearing will learn Wisdom, Prov. ii.

1. **H**EAR (O young Man) the Word of Eternal Wisdom, more profitable for thee than all the Wisdom of the World besides.

Love not the World, nor the things in the World; but reject them as Dung and Poison. Think upon the End without End, and Temptation will cease. Beware of thy Soul's Peril.

Give Offence to none, no not so much as in an unseemly Word.

If thy Earthly Father endeavour to draw thee from God, answer him, Thou hast a Father in Heaven. If
thy

thy Mother or Sister go about to impeach thee in the Ways of Piety, say unto them, “ Ye are mortal and “ deceitful; he who created me, shall govern me; “ and I am assured, he that serveth God shall never “ want ought that’s good.

Commend all thy Friends to God: And intreat them to amend themselves, and take heed of Sin, lest they offend God, and lose Celestial Treasures for Terrestrial Toys.

Frequent visiting of Friends is a disturbance of the Mind. The World passeth away, and the Lust thereof; and so shalt thou also, and all thy Friends with thee.

The Devil lays many Snares; and he who desires to become Rich, and seem Great, falls into divers of his Temptations. His ordinary Baits are Meat and Drink, a wandring Eye, idle Talk, and unconstant Heart, and weariness of Well-doing. Riches, Honour, Power, are all but Vanity.

What then seekest thou? What desirest thou to find in the World, where there is nothing pure? All is vain, false, and variable, besides the Love of God, and constant doing of Good.

Thou canst not love God perfectly, unless thou condemn thy Self and the World for God’s sake: who will recompence thee an hundred fold here, and reward thee with Eternal Life hereafter.

Let it not grieve thee to be removed far from thy Friends and Acquaintance, who do oftentimes prove an Impediment to thine Everlasting Safety, and do withdraw Divine Consolation from thee.

Where are now thy Companions, with whom thou laughedst and sportedst thy self? Thou wilt doubtless say, *I know not, they are gone and have left me.* Where is that thou didst see but yesterday? Thou wilt say, *I know, It is vanished.* What hurt hath thine Abstinence done thee? Thou wilt answer me, *None at all.*

He therefore who serveth God truly, and despiseth the whole World, with all its transitory Delights, is Wise; ye, he is Wise indeed: But he that serveth the World is most Unwise; and he that despiseth Christ, and his Cross, the greatest of Fools.

Wo unto all that are drunk with the Enticements of the World, whose merry Mates shall quickly forsake, flee from, and bury them.

Disciple. Behold, they are all dead, and shall never return unto me. I shall rather follow them, when it shall please God to call: They were Strangers upon Earth; and so am I: They have left all behind them; and so shall I: They are all passed away like a Shadow; and so must I.

C H A P. III.

A Farewell to the World.

Disciple.

Behold we have forsaken and followed Thee.

FArewel, ye gilded Follies, pleasing Troubles;
 Farewel, ye Honour'd Rags, and Cryстал Bubbles;
 Fame's but an hollow Eccho, Gold poor Clay;
 Honour the Darling but of one short Day;
 Beauty's chief Idol, but a Damask Skin;
 State, but a Golden Prison to live in,
 And torture Free-born Minds; Imbroidered Trains,
 But goodly Pageants; proudly swelling Veins,
 And Blood allay'd to Greatness, is but Loan
 Inherited, not Purchas'd, not our own.

* *Vit. Bon. Monach. & Epitaph. Brev. Mon.*

Fame

Fame, Riches, Honour, Beauty, State, Trains, Birth,
Are but the fading Blessings of the Earth.
I would be *Rich* ; but see Man, too unkind,
Digs in the Bowels of the Richest Mine.
I would be *Great* ; but yet the Sun doth still
Level his Beams against the rising Hill.
I would be *Fair* ; but see the Champion proud,
The World's fair Eye, oft setting in a Cloud.
I would be *Wise* ; but that the Fox, I see,
Suspected Guilty, when the Fox is free.
I would be *Poor* ; but see the humble Grass
Tramped upon by each unworthy Ass.
Rich, *hated* ; Wise, *suspected* ; *scorn'd* if Poor ;
Great, *fear'd* ; Fair, *tempted* ; High still *envy'd* more.
Would the World then adopt me for *her* Heir,
Would Beauties Queen entitle me the *Fair*,
Fame speak me Honour's Minion ; and could I,
With *Indian* Monarchs, and a speaking Eye,
Command bare Heads, bow'd Knees ; strike Justice *dumb* ;
As well as Blind and Lame ; and give a Tongue
To Stones, and live in them ; could I be All
That makes a Figure on this Earthly Ball :
Could I be more than any Man that lives,
Great, Wise, Rich, Fair, all in Superlatives :
Yet I these Favours wou'd more free resign,
Than ever Fortune would have had them mine.
I count one Minute of my Holy Leisure
Beyond the Mirth of all this Earthly Pleasure.

Master Remember, my Son, the Resolution thou hast
now made : And having taken thus at length thy leave
of the Sodom of this World, make haste for thy Life ;
and see that thou cast not once thine Eyes upon it a-
gain. Having laid thine hand to the Plough, there
is no looking back for thee more. Having taken up-
on thy Shoulders the Cross of Christ, there is no casting
it away again. Hold to thy Resolution. What hast
thou

thou to do longer with the World? Follow thou Christ.
This is true Wisdom.

C H A P. IV.

Of true Wisdom to be sought from God.

The Master.

Blessed is the Man that hath found Wisdom, Prov. iii.

SEEK that true Wisdom, which Christ taught by Doctrine and Example. A truly Wise Man hateth Iniquity, speaketh Truth, and worketh Righteousness. He who liveth Soberly, Chastly, Piously, Humbly and Devoutly, and doth avoid the Danger of Temptations, is a Wise Man, and pleaseth God; he hath a good Report, keepeth a good Conscience, driveth away Sadness, possesseth Peace, and oftentimes receiveth that Divine Consolation into his Heart, which the World neither favoureth nor knoweth.

The Wisdom of the *World* is reputed Vanity and Folly with God: It deceives its Lovers, and in the end torments them. The Wisdom of the *Flesh* is the Death of the Soul, which suddenly snatches away Intemperate and Voluptuous Persons; for Sorrow and Pain constantly attend these Carnal Joys. But *true Wisdom* is drawn from the sweet Words and sacred Acts of Christ. Who counselleth us to despise the World, flee Delights, tame the Flesh, suffer Grief, undergo Labour, and follow Him fully.

Now if any one therefore have a mind to obtain the Divine Wisdom, let him despise the Delights of the Flesh, and keep a strict Guard on his outward Senses, lest he draw in the Vanities of the World: Let him
turn

turn himself Inward, inspect his own Defects, examine day by day his Conscience, bewail his Offences, and do all that is possible to prevent the same for the future : Let him breath after Heavenly Objects, account this present Life as a Prison, feel much Pain in being absent from Christ, and reckon most tiresome the being detained from the Company of the Blessed : Let him not covet to possess any thing in this World, that so his Heart may be always free : Let him esteem all Temporal Joy, Sorrow ; and, through the Desire of the Eternal Invisibles, consider the affluence of all Externals no otherwise than as Indigence it self. These most intimate Sentiments, he, that suffers himself to be carried Outwards must needs be Ignorant of ; and he that hankers after Honours, shall be sure never to find the true Wisdom.

Blessed therefore, O young Man, is that Disciple in whose Heart the Law of God resteth ; whose Mouth meditateth the Wisdom of the Saints, not the Vanity of the World ; whose Words are not Flashy, but proceed from a right and mature Judgment, according to solid Piety ; whose Deeds always tend to the Will of God, and the Hallowing of his Name ; whose Steps, both Interior and Exterior, both at Home and Abroad, are all directed according to the Divine Word, and adjusted to the Evangelical Standard. Hence it is the Wise and Spiritual Man's Study to discern Truth from Falshood, Vice from Vertue, what is necessary from what is Superfluous, what is Honourable from what is Scandalous, what is Evident from that which is Obscure, what is Expedient from that which is Unlawful ; and to distinguish the Private from the Publick, the Crooked from the Strait, the Righteous from the Perverse, the Sincere from the Hypocritical, the Real from the Counterfeit, and Simplicity and Innocence from Craftiness and Guile.

Disciple.

Disciple. And hence, I suppose, it is that the Lord hath said by his Prophet, *If thou take forth the* Jer. xv. 19. *Precious from the Vile, thou shalt be as my Mouth.* Is it not so, I pray ?

Master. He said so to his Prophet and gave it him as a most particular and express Charge : He said so even to *Jeremy*, who from a Child had been ordained and consecrated to the Prophet's Office, which renders it still the more weighty ; and sets forth more the great necessity of watching strictly against all Mixtures, as well as Counterfeits, in Religion ; and of separating diligently the False from the True, and the Vile from the Precious. Nothing then is more proper to our purpose, both in the Research and Possession of the Heavenly Wisdom, than this Divine Caution and Monition : Which thou hast done well in this place to alledge ; and in thy Progress, must take good heed hereafter never to forget. For True and Just is God ; and by Wisdom are we made the Sons of God, in all Truth and Justice. What said *David* in Spirit ?

Disciple. *Righteous is the Lord*, said he : *He loveth Righteousness ; and will behold the thing that is just, and true.*

Master. And therefore he seeks such, and loves them who walk before him in Truth. Their Steps shall not be supplanted by the Adversary ; neither shall the Blandishments of the World be able to wheedle them, nor their own Concupiscences to ensnare, and lead them astray ; but they shall be secured as in the secret Place of the Most High, by that Wisdom which is Pure, Peaceable, Gentle, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisie. For the Right Hand of God never fails to protect those that walk in Simplicity of Heart under his Wings ; and all that they shall say or do, shall be unto them for Good, shall advance them to higher degrees of Perfection here, and add to their Crown of Glory hereafter. Blessed

Blessed are all they who receive this true Wisdom, as their Heritage from God ; for by it a Door is open'd for them into the Heavenly Palace, and they shall reign with Christ for ever, and be feasted with *Abraham* and with all Saints. Imitate therefore the Humble Life of Christ, if thou seekest Wisdom in earnest. Where Humility is, there is Wisdom ; but where Pride is, there is always Shame and Folly. Shut also the Door of thy Mouth, and reveal not thy Secret to every one. Draw in and recollect thy self, in Peace and Silence of Mind ; and pray thy Heavenly Father to bestow this most rich Gift upon thee : Beseech him to do this, not for any Desert of thine own, but out of his mere overflowing Grace, for the most precious Merit of his Beloved Son, our Lord, that Wisdom (and Word) which was for thee *made Flesh*, and dwelt among us.

Now it behoveth thee to open unto him the Closet of thy Heart ; that so he, who stood so long at the Door thereof, and knocked, may enter in, and dwell with thee after an hidden manner. Open wide, O beloved Christian, thy Heart, for him to enter in, who is the Wisdom of God, and Light of the World, the best Instructor, the most loving Comforter, and the most faithful Guide of thy Life ; and with Earnestness and Importunity, beseech his Majesty that he would often be pleased to Visit and Enlighten thee, to teach thine Ignorance, to strengthen thy Weakness, to raise up thy Hope, to dispel Diffidence, confirm Faith, infuse Charity, and increase Devotion.

Disciple: He it is indeed that *stands* at the Door of my Heart, and all the while thou art speaking to me *knocks* : I will open then to Him, that so I may learn true Wisdom ; and be strengthen'd to pursue my Warfare, and by an holy Violence obtain the Heavenly Kingdom.

C H A P. V.

Of the Warfare against a Man's own proper Vices.

The Master.

The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth Violence, Mat. xi.

MAny Begin well, some Proceed well, but very few come to Perfection: For either we lean too much unto the Flesh, or are puff'd up with Pride, or cast down with Affliction. Alas ! how difficult a thing it is to find a Man, who can seek God purely, overcome Himself perfectly, and relinquish the World, not by halves, but thoroughly. Hence a certain Holy Man was wont to say, *Christian Perfection is a Phoenix in the World ; so exceeding hard it is entirely to conquer Self.*

1. He that labours not for Virtue, shall never be filled with the Sweetness of it.

2. All Virtue hath Good annex'd to it; and the Good doth recreate him that endeavours lawfully to obtain it.

3. All Vice is attended with Evil, and hath a Rod at its Tail for the Fool: There is a dying even with Laughter.

4. Whoever works Wickedness, procures himself a bad End: he forfeits his Honour, destroys his Rest, meets with Pain, incurs Shame, multiplies Sorrow, and at last loses even all Taste of Good.

5. He that abstains from lawful things, is in the less danger to be hurt of unlawful.

6. He that ties a Dog's Tongue, need not fear Biting; and he who strictly keeps Silence, will not offend with his Lips.

7. He

7. He is far from Lying, Strife, Detraction, Evil-speaking, Wrath and Murmuring, who loves to be hid in a little still Corner; and he who takes Pleasure in locking up his Lips in Silence, beyond speaking to the World, is by this means safe from such Harpies as these.

8. He who heareth not Evil, nor looketh upon Vanity, can more easily avoid, and neglect to think thereupon: For the Custody of the Senses is the Cause of Purity, the Discipline of Peace, and the Oratory of Devotion.

9. When Anger entreth the Mind, Wisdom departeth from the Prudent.

10. He who speaks roughly, is made thereby like to a snarling Dog: Whereas he that answers mildly, mitigates the force of Wrath; and, instead of Thorns, affords Roses to the afflicted Soul.

11. Blessed is the Tongue of the Prudent, because it healeth the Wounds of the angry Man.

12. The Mouth of the Righteous, having God's Law in his Heart, speaketh Wisdom; and his Tongue will be discoursing of Judgment and Truth.

13. Wisdom is the principal Thing: therefore let thy Eyes look strait before thee; and buy the Truth at any rate, and sell it not again.

14. He who withstands Vices at the beginning, and before they get too much an head, may then far more easily subdue and expel them, than when they grow greater and more stubborn.

15. He who is busied about devout Exercises, as Prayer, and Meditation on Heavenly Objects, is like unto a wise Gardener, who planteth Roses and Lillies in his Garden: His Joy shall be great in the future World; with Holy Angels he will rejoice in the *Celestial Paradise*.

16. He who keepeth the Purity of his Body and Mind, is like unto the *Angels*: But he is a Slave of

Devils, who pleaseth himself in vicious Courses, and wicked Imaginations.

17. An hard Combat it is to resist Pleasure ; but far harder will the Punishment and Pain hereafter be. And who is he that shall contend with Everlasting Burnings ?

18. Heat is overcome with Heat ; the Heat of Lust with the Heat of Divine Charity : One Nail is driven out with another.

19. When the Love of God enters into the Heart, all transitory Things depart thence.

20. Wise is he that contemns a thousand Thousands of them ; and that esteems the World, the whole World, as a meer *Nothing*. According to an old Proverbial Rhime, which runs thus :

* *Q. What is the Pope ? What is the King ?*

A. The Pope and King are both Nothing.

Q. What means the Pope with's Leaden Bull ?

A. Both He and That are surely Null.

Pope, Emperor and King all are merely Nothing : The End of them all is Death, the Worm, loathsome Carrion, and Ashes. Let a Man therefore vaunt himself as much as he please, he is Nothing : Death sweeps all away. Happy then, yea, thrice Happy is that Pilgrim who finds Entertainment in Heaven, and who has there an Abiding City.

Disciple. What thou hast spoken to me is matter of much Satisfaction and Delight. And as a good Disciple is always ready to acquiesce in his Master's Counsel, and will presume to do nothing rashly upon his own head, without his Judgment and Determination first had ; so am I desirous chearfully to submit to these Counsels of Wisdom, and to be determin'd by

* *Omnia sunt Nulla : Rex, Papa, & Plumbea Bulla.*

what thou shalt convince me to be the Will of *our Master* in the Heavens, who hath granted a Commisſion to thee to inſtruct and teach me in the Path of Life. How delightful to my taſte are thy Oracles, O Wiſdom of God ! Thy Proverbs have given me Underſtanding. O that I could obſerve thy Precepts, which are more delicious than Honey to my Mouth ! Thy Testimonies verily are wonderful ; and the Ma-ni-feſtation of thy Words, O Chriſt, giveth Light : Therefore ſhall my Soul ſearch into them ; becauſe hereby Underſtanding is afforded to the little Ones, ſuch as I, and a Lamp is given to my Feet. O that my Ways were henceforward made ſo direct, that I might not offend either in Word or Deed ; and that I might walk at liberty with an enlarged Heart, my Feet being kept out of every evil Way ! O that I were for this end girt with Strength, and that the Hands which hang down were taught to fight in the Spiritual Battel ; and my Arms made like a Bow of Braſs, to reſiſt all the Enemies which war againſt my Soul to deſtroy it ! Well, I hope, that theſe holy Obſervations and Inſtructions, which I have heard, ſhall abide with me, and fortify me under every Neceſſity, or Temptation, againſt ſuch evil Inclinations of Nature as I am chiefly prone too, or ſuch perverſe Habits as I heretofore fooliſhly have contracted : And that the Diſcipline of my Lord Chriſt ſhall thoroughly amend me, and his right Hand always hold me up, ſo that my Feet may be made to tread firm, and I may even run in the way which his Majeſty hath preſcribed me. But the Grace of *Devotion* I ſtill, alas ! find to be very much wanting in me, which makes me more ſhy and backward than I ought to be in my Approaches before Him. Could I but arrive at this, then ſhould I not deſpair of obtaining all ſuch things as are needful for me in the Houſe of my Pilgrimage, and would not faint in my Journey, but proceed on till I come to

the Mount of God. Wherefore I beg yet this farther Favour, that I may be instructed to the Attainment of this most necessary Grace, which my Soul prefers before all Riches. And for as much as I have seen many relinquish the World, and after that return to it again, and wallow more than ever in the Mire of their Corruptions; and as thou hast warned me expressly concerning the many that begin well, whereof there are but very few who proceed and persevere to the End; Therefore am I now very pressing, that I may know where and how to obtain this which I stand in such need of, to support and lead me on.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Grace of Devotion.

The Master and Disciple.

Wo unto you that Laugh, for ye shall Weep, Luke xi.

AS Virtue and Vice cannot dwell together, so neither can Devotion be attain'd in merry and frothy Company, but in Stillness and Solitariness. It is not to be sought for with Laughter, and at a Feast; but with Mourning, and in Silence.

Perfect Virtue is not suddenly acquired, but by little and little, with much Wrestling and Painfulness, and a firm Resolution to grow continually better; which must strengthen it self often with Fasting, Watching, Praying, Meditating, Studying, Exercising, and by abstaining from idle Conversation; remaining also willingly with God in secret. This is the Path leading to Devotion; and by these Means must thou maintain the Fervour of Religion.

All Joy, which is not of God, doth soon perish, defile and hurt; but Godly Sorrow begets a Joy in the Spirit, which cannot be taken away: honest Discourse delights the Ear; but rude Language disturbs the Mind, and idle Talk fruitlessly ravel out Time.

Be Diligent in doing Good; Patient in suffering Evil: For so shalt thou be Comforted of God.

The only way to make thy self happy, is by praising God perpetually: The only way to praise God acceptably, is to fulfil his Will readily, to depend upon his Grace fully, and to watch thine Heart constantly.

Seldom shalt thou be without one of these two, *Joy* or *Grief*; and happy is he that converts all into Good, and makes Advantage of the worst. He who loves God, receives Bitter and Sweet both alike from his Hands; and gives Thanks for all.

He stands upon a good Foundation, who neither in himself, nor any other Man, but in God alone placeth all his Hope.

Disciple. All my Hope is in thee, O God: I stand Naked and Poor before thee, begging thy Grace, and imploring thy Mercy. Do thou refresh, Good Lord, thy hungry Beggar; enflame his cold Heart with the Fire of thy Love; enlighten his Blindness in the Brightness of thy all-raising Presence. Let all Earthly Things be changed into Bitterness, all heavy and contrary Things into Patience.

O my God, Love Everlasting, my whole Good, and boundless Felicity, with what a vehement Desire doth my Soul long to entertain Thee! O that thou would'st so wholly fire me with thy Presence, as by the Grace of internal Union, and most ardent Love, I may become with thee One Spirit: and may, thence please thee in all Holiness of Living, according to this very *Foundation* which thou thy self hast laid in me; and as thy Saints in their several Generations have done!

C H A P. VII.

Of the Word of God, and the Word of Man.

The Master and Disciple.

Blessed are they which hear the Word of God, Luke xi.

Master. **W**HEN the Word of God is read, God speaketh unto thee: Listen therefore then with all Humility and Thankfulness unto the Voice of God.

Disciple. I must confess my Curiosity has often hinder'd me much in Reading the Scriptures, when I would needs nicely understand and discuss, what became me better to pass over in Simplicity, and to receive with humble Thankfulness.

Master. Thou oughtest to read the Scriptures in the same Spirit wherein they were written.

Disciple. Blessed is he whom the Truth thus teacheth: and to whom the Spirit is given, which may unseal what is herein written by it self.

Master. Yea, Blessed is he indeed. But despair not thou of obtaining a measure of this good Spirit, which the Father will not refuse to give thee for asking, and believing. For where-ever the Word of God is read, *there the holy Spirit doth*
De Discip. *hiddenly operate*; who reproveth the
Claust. c. i. n. 2. Wicked of Sin, and fortifieth the Godly, through Hope and Consolation of the Scriptures.

Now as for other Books of Devotion, which may be written according to these, the Simple and Plain thou oughtest always to esteem no less than the Profound and Deep. Let not the Authority of the *Author* either offend or invite thee, but let the Love of the Truth draw thee only, without Respect to Persons or
 Names.

Names. Truth is not to be despised, of whomsoever it be uttered.

He who lives well, teaches well ; and he that reads well, is the Messenger of God.

A faithful Messenger concealeth what is hurtful, revealeth what is profitable, and cannot counterfeit.

Simple Truth hath a pleasant Sound ; and when it is most Naked, is most Eloquent.

Subtil Speech hurteth those that are weak ; and smooth Language deceiveth often. A false Babler is a Disturber of Peace ; and he that hearkneth to him shall not escape Scandal.

A discreet judicious Person is worthy of all Praise : but he that is harsh is not worthy of Favour, and the unmerciful Man deserves no Mercy.

A froward Mind tormenteth it self grievously, vexeth the Innocent frequently, curseth secretly such as are in Authority ; and derideth openly those that do well, and far better than himself. He that is fraudulent in Words deceiveth such as trust in him ; and therefore shall have but few Friends.

To conceal Evil, is Good ; to speak Truth, Holy ; to live Temperately, Reasonable ; to hurt none, is but Just ; to do good to all, Pious ; to edify thy Neighbour, both by Counsel and Example, Religious.

It is the part of a prudent Man to premeditate always what he hath to do ; and not without a Cause to be changing his Measures, or seeking after somewhat new ; not slightly to declare things unknown, nor presently to confirm what is doubtful.

The Silence of the Tongue helps much the Peace of the Heart ; for the Mouth of a Fool is always open. He who desireth to please God, let him always keep Watch before his Heart, and before his Tongue, lest he lose the Grace of Devotion, and offend the Children of Peace. Many fair Words will not fill a Sack ;
neither

neither is the Eloquence of Words able to sanctify any Person. He who *doth* well, shall *have* well : It is the *Doer*, the *Doer* alone.

Disciple. O let my Heart, Lord, be found in thy Statutes ! They are dearer to me than Gold and Topazes. Let thy Law be my only Meditation ; and make me in all my Actions to consult thy Precepts, that I may be comforted.

C H A P. VIII.

Of Divine Consolation in Affliction.

The Lord is with them that are of a contrite Heart,
Psal. xxxiv.

Master. **T**HERE is no Man so Religious and Devout, as to be always lively and vigorous in Spiritual Exercises, and that meeteth not with some dead Weight now and then to pluck him downward. When therefore thou shalt be in Tribulation, or Sorrow of Heart, then thou art with Christ upon the Cross : But when again thou findest Comfort by Prayer, through the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, then thou risest again (as it were) with Christ from the Grave, and dost joyfully celebrate the Feast of Passover in newness of Life with thy Saviour Christ.

Again, when thou shalt hear any speaking roughly or reproachfully to thee, then is given unto thee to drink of thy Lord and Saviour's Cup, Vinegar and Gall, for the healing of thy Soul. Be silent, and drink of the Cup of Salvation without murmuring, and the Lord will answer for thee in Life and in Death : God will not forget thee.

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There is nothing more Glorious than by Silence and Patience to stop the Mouths of Evil Speakers, and so follow Christ's Example, who spake not a word before *Pilate*, when he was most vehemently and maliciously accused of many false Crimes. For thou art not better sure than thy God and Lord, who was scourged and scoffed at for thee, and at length crucified by the wicked Jews. Tribulation and Anguish is the Touchstone of Virtue and Goodness. Christ shall not want Lovers and Companions at a Feast, but he shall find few Followers at a Fast.

He that is a true Lover of the crucified Jesus, neither refuseth nor blusheth at his Sufferings, that he may bear part with him in the Scandal of the Cross ; for he whose Life is hid with Christ in God, will account it greatest gain to suffer and die for Christ. By how much more fervently any Man loveth God, by so much the less doth he fear Death, and hath so much the greater Desire to be dissolved ; and to live happily with Christ, and participate of the Joy of Saints and Angels for ever.

Happy Souls, whose Bowels yearn after the Lord Christ, and do in all Humility prostrate themselves in Prayer at his Feet, that they may constantly persevere and go on in Grace unto the End ! O happy Souls indeed ! who even burn and melt at Heart with the Love of Jesus ; who, even for his sake, despise and spurn at the good Things of this present fading Life, at all *Appearances* of Good in the Creatures ; yea, who bear also, not only with Patience, but Cheerfulness, the Evil Ones too, as looking upon Jesus, who was consummated and perfected by Sufferings.

Verily blessed and happy are they, who, for the Name of Jesus, are ready both to Do and Suffer all things ; esteeming the greatest Reproach that can be underwent for it as the highest Honour, and as the most excelling Glory of an humble Follower of his

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Steps.

Steps. In Jesus is their Safety and their Glory, amidst all their Troubles in this World : Their Succour is from him, and in him is their Hope always. Therefore pour they forth their Hearts before him, and even in a desert unpassable Land, and without Water, they contemplate his Power and Mercy, and with joyful Lips offer him Praises ; for that he maketh for them the Rock a River, and replenisheth their famished Souls as with Marrow and Fatness.

C H A P. IX.

Of the Joy of a good Conscience in the Holy Ghost.

Rejoice in the Lord always, Phil. iv.

1. **R**ejoice with the Good, bear with the Evil, suffer with the Afflicted, pardon such as trespass against thee, and pray for all.

2. Cast far from thee anxious and distracting Thoughts and Cares ; and *with all thy Power shun Melancholy*, which produces Deadness in Devotion, and Rancour of Spirit.

3. But do thou solace thy self with the sweet and sacred Meditation of the Life and Passion of Christ ; so shalt thou find a sovereign Remedy against all Sorrow, and all Temptation.

4. A good Life, that is good indeed, deserveth Praise ; but a dull tepid Conversation is burthensome both to it self and others.

5. A good Conscience never wanteth Joy ; but an evil Conscience is its own proper Torment.

6. Study always to do well, and thou shalt never want a sweet Tranquillity of Mind.

7. The

7. The evil Conversation of the Wicked cannot hurt thee, if thou remain firm in the Way of Righteousness.

8. A good Conversation bringeth with it Joy of Heart, and the sweet Odour of deserved Praise, whereas contrariwise a vain Ostentation perisheth even in the very speaking.

9. Much better is the sharp and even four Check of the Wise, than the fair and flattering Praise of Fools.

10. An humble Prayer mounteth up into Heaven, appeaseth God, obtaineth Mercy, and defeateth the Devil's deepest Subtilties.

11. An humble Confession procureth Pardon, but a frivolous Excuse aggravateth the Guilt.

12. True Contrition defaceth Sin, and fervent Devotion diminisheth Punishment.

13. Idle Jangling withdraws the Grace of Devotion, but Religious Conference augments Joy.

14. An heedful Guard over the Senses is every where necessary; and Restraint is profitable for a wandering Mind.

15. Frequent Prayer is a firm Protection: and a silent Mouth is a Mansion-house of Peace.

16. Many are very hot in the Beginning, but Perseverance gets the Crown.

17. The Yoke of Christ is light to all that love him; heavy to such as bear lukewarm Affections to him: Bitter to the Proud, Gentle to the Meek, and Dear to the Humble.

18. *Sweet Jesus maketh all things Sweet*; and he bearing the Burthen, it cannot but be light.

19. The Carnal Man always seeketh pleasant things, but the Spiritual those only that are profitable.

20. It is the good Man's greatest Grief, that he cannot extinguish all the Motions of Sin; but wherefore doth God permit Sin? Even for this very End, that
Man

Man may humble himself, and implore the help of God.

21. As the proud Man takes pleasure in his Honours, and the rich Man in his Wealth; even so doth the truly humble, in Contempt of himself; and the poor in Spirit, in his Poverty of Estate.

22. The Glory and Riches of the Servants of God, are Christ, the King of Heaven, the King of Glory: For in him are all the Treasures of the Godhead deposited, and the overflowing Fulness of all Blessedness.

23. All Delight without God is vain and silly; All Joy is Madness, all Plenty is Penury; because nothing can satisfy the hungry Soul, but that God alone who created it, and created it for himself to fill.

24. It is a great Nobleness of Mind to be above coveting any Worldly Thing; and no small Freedom is it not to be a Slave to Earth.

25. The Life of Righteousness is to ** do Good, to suffer Evil*, and to *praise God in all, and for all*; and never to be proud of ones good Deeds.

26. He truly praiseth God, who thinketh vilely of himself; and whatsoever Good he thinketh, speaketh, or acteth, doth faithfully ascribe the Glory of all unto God. When therefore thou shalt be tempted to Vain-glory, consent not unto it; but forthwith humble thy self, and say with the holy Prophet, *Not unto us, Lord, not unto us; but unto thy Name give the Glory.*

27. It is the most glorious Triumph of Man, to trample on his own Delights, to assault his own Fears, and to suffer with Meekness the greatest Trials of his Patience.

* *Bona agere, mala pati.*

C H A P. X.

Of the good Conversation of an humble Christian.

The Master and Disciple.

God giveth Grace unto the Humble, Jam. iv.

1. **E**Very Word and Action of a Religious Person should be adorn'd with an humble Modesty, and free from all touch and tincture of Vain-glory.

2. It is a good sign of growing Virtue in Youth, when they are lowly in Carriage, and parsimonious in Speech, and especially in Presence of the Aged.

3. He that endureth not himself to hear, and doth not learn to be silent, shall never be reputed amongst the Sage and Learned; therefore many are esteem'd Fools, by reason of their rude and barbarous Manners.

4. To obey readily, to pray frequently, to meditate devoutly, to study chearfully, to labour patiently, to shun Diversion, and to love Retirement, do make a Religious Man, and give a quiet Mind.

We do read, that God had respect unto *Abel* and his Offering, but unto *Cain* and his Offering he had no regard: Why? Because *Abel* was Innocent and Humble, *Cain* was Envious and Perverse. Be thou an *Abel* likewise.

5. Have Patience, O *Abel*, with him that injures thee: Strive not with *Cain*, lest thou lose thy Peace and good Name.

6. It is better to lose thy Substance than displease God, hurt thy Brother, and break Charity.

Disciple. This I know: But what if I should neither please God, nor do my Brother any good, yet lose my Substance too. This then I would be gladly satisfied in, how I ought to part with it, so as best

to secure my Interest in God, and to be most advantageous to my Neighbour.

Master. God is not Unrighteous that he will forget thy Works and Labour that proceed of *Love*: Shew this Love for his Name's sake, by ministring according to thy Power out of what thou hast to the Saints, and to all Men. So shalt thou both please him, and do the greatest good both to others and to thy self; that is, doing it *for his Name*, and as unto Christ himself solely and purely.

Disciple. I hope to remember this; and (by his Grace) to direct my Eye aright always herein; and to lay up in store for my self a good Foundation against the time to come. But pray proceed on, that I may learn Instruction.

Master. If thou wilt gain Treasure in Heaven, load not thy self with Earth; if thou desirest Everlasting Honour, despise Temporal Glory; if thou wishest for Peace, give no Place to Wrath; if thou wilt be great in Heaven, be little, very little in the World; Justify not thy self before Men, if thou would'st be justified before God.

7. The Praise of Man is vain, where an ill Conscience accuseth.

8. A daring and a wordy Man are both alike blameworthy, neither observing the Golden Rule of Modesty.

9. Many strong Men have perished through their over-much Confidence; and many weak ones have recovered Strength, for that diffiding in themselves, they hoped in and called on the help of God.

10. The humble and meek render themselves amiable unto all; but the rigid and austere make the nearest unto them stand afar off.

11. He that suffereth silently, vanquisheth his Enemy with obsequious Charity.

12. He who voluntarily assisteth others, and sympathizeth with the Afflicted, doth multiply Friends.

13. He who knoweth not how to be silent in season, doth lay himself open to publick Shame.

14. He is a wise and skilful Master of Art indeed; who hath learned to render himself, both for his Moral and Christian Virtues, approved and commendable in the Sight of God and Men.

15. He is a valiant Man indeed, who manfully opugneth his Vices.

16. So he is a great Lord, who is Lord of himself, being able to subdue his own sinful Lusts; and he a stout and well-armed Soldier, who can beat down his proud Flesh with the Arms of Continency; and he worthy to have a Place with Angels in Heaven, who keeps his Vessel holy upon Earth.

17. Whosoever doth thus is the Friend of God, the Companion of Angels, the Kinsman of the Heavenly Virgins, and Beloved Fellow-Citizen of the Saints above. The Chaste Humble Person overcometh Devils, and is a Terror to the Unclean Spirits.

18. He is a *great Prelate*, who carrieth himself Virtuously and Godly; and giveth a good Example unto those that are under his Charge.

19. He is worthy to be celebrated with the Praises of all good Men, who earnestly endeavours to become Like unto them in solid Virtue and Goodness.

20. He is truly Noble, whose own proper Virtues have ennobled him; and he the best Gentleman, who is the least a Slave to his own Passions.

21. He is Fair that is made clean from Sin; but the Wicked, let him be never so Beautiful without; is as Black as Hell within.

22. He is Happy and Rich, who is replenished with the Grace of God, and desireth no other Honour and Wealth than this.

23. He is a Fool and a Mad Man, who loveth things Hurtful, and leaveth such as are Useful, with respect to his Grand Interest.

24. He is a Wise Man, who wandereth not out of the holy Paths of his Fathers; and keepeth the Articles of his Faith, without wavering and without mixture.

25. The Love of God and of his Precepts is honourable Wisdom : And the Fear of his Name the principal point of Understanding.

26. If any desire to be instructed by thee, shew him the *Way of Humility*, and chalk it out to him by thy own Example.

27. He who is truly Humble cannot be puffed up, scorneth to be commended, rejoiceth when he is vilified, and quickly pardoneth when he is injured.

Disciple. These Instructions will I bind upon my Fingers, and endeavour to write them upon the Table of my Heart, that they may be always for my Use. They are to me as Apples of Gold set in Tables of Silver : Hereby shall I know how to direct my Conversation aright. Exceeding Righteous and True are the Testimonies and Counsels which I hear : O that I had Understanding accordingly ; and that I was made strong in the Strength of my Salvation to fulfil the same ! Let thy Wisdom, and thy Grace, O Lord Christ, be with me to direct me in all thy Ways, and uphold my Feet from falling. Let the Proverbs of thy Mouth enter into my Soul, and engrave them on my Heart ; that I thereby may be made Wise and Gracious, Valiant, and Mighty in thy Spirit, and in the Law thereof ; and may constantly abide in thee, so as by a good Conversation to bring forth good Fruit, to the safety of my Soul. I know that of my self, I am as unstable as Water : and that all my Thoughts vanish. But in thee, Lord, is my Trust, who art my Rock.

C H A P. XI.

The Instability of Man's Heart.

Master.

He which abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much Fruit, John xv.

THE Cogitations and Affections of Men are various and mutable; but they are all vain and impure which are not of God. O Heart of Man! Too too Covetous and Insatiable, how desperate and wicked a thing it is for thee to forsake thy God! What dost thou talk of so many vain Trifles, which can neither perfectly Comfort thee, nor plenarily Suffice thee? What then wilt thou do? Which Way wilt thou turn thy self, that it may go well with thee? O return speedily unto thine Heart; consider how grossly thou hast offended, and labour diligently to amend. Make thine Heart a fit Habitation for God to dwell in: Keep out all vain Imaginations, and external Cares, which would rush in upon thee; that thou may'st be filled with the sweet Consolation of the holy Spirit.

He who wanders often abroad, seldom comes better home. All outward fair shews tend to nothing; they neither satisfy the Eyes that see them, nor fill the Ears that hear them: And unless all be referr'd unto the Glory of God that made them, the Vision of all that behold them is but vain. This Consideration made *David* sing Praises with his Harp unto God on high: *Thou hast delighted me, O Lord, (saith he) with that which thou hast made; and I will rejoice in giving Praise for the Operation of thine Hands.* No Man can find solid Contentment in any created Good.

Abide in the Truth, and the Truth shall make thee free from all Lies and Crimes. fabulously reported of thee: All false Slanders and Detractions shall be returned upon the heads of the Detractors. Christ is Truth, and he who is Christ's Disciple loveth Truth, and embraceth Virtue.

He who abandoneth the Truth for Temporal Gain and Honour, destroyeth his Faith, and loseth the Favour of God. God is Truth, and suffereth not long Lyars to lie hid. A wicked Person may counterfeit for a time, but the Truth shall prevail in the end; and the Lyar shall be confounded, when he least thinketh of it.

Think not on, neither desire any thing, but what is just and lawful, pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God; and such are Virtuous Operations, and Charitable Works, done to the Honour of God.

He who speaketh Truth, and hateth Wickedness, shall be great in the Kingdom of Heaven; he who worketh Unrighteousness, and hateth Truth, shall be tormented with unutterable Pains. Abide in Truth and Love, so shalt thou find Favour with God, Angels, and Men. Fear not a wicked Person, who haply may rob thee of Transitory Things; but be thou Patient, and God will recompence thee with those that are incomparably greater and better, even Eternal Beatitudes, and Riches which no Canker-worm can touch.

If thou wilt preserve Peace and a good Conscience, thou must be Patient, Humble, and Obedient: Thou hast no more dangerous Enemies, than thine own inordinate Lusts. Wherefore if thou ponder advisedly thine own Defects, thou wilt weigh little the Deeds of others.

C H A P. XII.

Of the Trust we ought to have in God in Time of Trouble.

Hope in God, and do Good, Psal. xxxvii.

1. **L**ET no Man pride himself vainly in his Temporal Goods, nor presume foolishly of his great Friends and Kindred, because all are uncertain and full of dangers: But he who putteth his trust in the Lord, and calleth upon him in time of need, shall never be forsaken of him, in what trouble soever he shall be.

2. There is a great Peace to him that faith well, that doth well, that hurteth none, and keepeth himself out of all Evil Ways and Wicked Imaginations.

3. Shut the Door of thy House, and thou shalt be in Peace.

4. He is very apt to be foiled, who fenceth not his Heart daily with some Good against the strokes of Satan.

5. Many there are, that when the World goes not well with them, desist to pray, and to strive; when notwithstanding Virtue is not gotten without Labour and Strife, nor kept without Care and Caution.

6. A licentious vain Person abhorreth Discipline and Retirement, as the Bird doth the Snare: But whosoever accepteth God's Rod as a Boon, by the Stripes thereof obtaineth his Soul's Salvation, and Everlasting Health, and shall receive in Heaven a Crown of greater Glory.

7. When thou art grievously tempted, or sharply chastised, derided or scorned, despair not; but remember that thine Iniquity doth justly deserve greater

Afflictions should be laid upon thee. Endure therefore patiently whatsoever shall befall thee ; and say confidently, *It was good for me. (O Lord) that I was afflicted, that I might learn thy righteous Statutes.*

Disciple. Indeed my Flesh and my Heart at first failed me ; but God was the Strength of my Heart, in the midst of my Affliction and Temptation : And he therefore shall be my Portion for ever ; therefore I shall not be moved.

Master. Temptation and Trouble shew a Man the Greatness of his own Poverty and Indigence, and teach him what great need he hath of God. Be not then over Confident.

He is a foolish and unfaithful Servant, who grows proud of his Master's Goods, and takes liberty thereby to despise others.

He who contemneth his Fellow Servants, and thinketh himself better than they, is an Offence to God and Man ; howbeit this is an Error we, alas ! are very much subject unto through want of Humility, and due Consideration of our own Deserts, which upon all occasions we ought heedfully to Weigh and Respect.

Every Man is Burthen enough to himself : What then can it profit a Man to thrust his Shoulders under another Man's Load, and to take up more than he is able to bear ? For this very Cause a Man doth sometimes fall and err openly, and neglect somewhat, to the end that being ashamed, he may humble himself before others, and may learn to sympathize with, and support such as are falling ; and being taught by his own Experience may say, " This is a Man, not an " Angel : And as it happened unto me, so it hath be- " fallen him ; we are Brethren. I was evil conceit- " ed ; haply he was well minded. It is proper to God alone, neither to fall, nor to fail. Wherefore then dost thou rejoice at another Man's Failings ?

Then

Thou which standest take heed lest thou fall: Be ashamed of thine own Backsliding; open Confusion is oftentimes the effect of vain Ostentation.

Disciple. I said in my haste *I shall not be moved*. The good Lord be merciful unto me: And free my Soul from all vain Confidence. O that he would vouchsafe to look upon this my Petition: And save his Servant who trusts in him! Lead me, O God, in thy Way; and cause me to enter into thy Truth. Support me, good Lord, or I faint, O let my Prayer come up now before thee; lest I fall, and rise not again.

C H A P. XIII.

Of the Power of Prayer, and Profit of Reading.

Master and Disciple.

Pray continually, 1 Thess. V.

Master. **P**Ray without Intermission.

Disciple. Wherefore?

Master. Because Tribulations and Temptations are every where; Snares and Pitfalls every where; and the Invasions and Insults of Evil Angels indifferently in all Places, at Home and Abroad. There is no Peace or Rest, any where: Good News is rarely heard. Hostilities are continually committed: Many Difficulties and Battles on every side rise up: Within are Fears; without are Fightings. There is not one Day without Labour and Trouble: Nor so much as one Hour without the Apprehension of Death: Nor even one Minute wherein thou canst pretend to be perfectly secure, and without all Peril. And since it is so, it behoveth thee for certain e-

very where, and without ceasing, to stand on thy Guard, and to *Pray*.

Dost thou consider also the Face of the Present Times, and the Tempests of God shaking the Earth, and calling as it were aloud to *Pray*? Consider well, O Beloved in Christ: And reflect soberly on what thou seest, and on what thou hearest, continually: For undeniably Wars and Combustions fall out by the just Judgments of God for the Sins of Men, and that all true Christian People may be quickened by those Stripes, unto the Search of Heaven and Heavenly Things: And therefore assiduous faithful Prayer is no less expedient against the Perils of the World, than a Coat of Mail is requisite against the Darts of our Enemies. Remember he who prayeth not, fighteth not: And he that resisteth not manfully is quickly overcome, and loseth the Crown.

Disciple. But who, alas! Is able to *Pray* and Fight Continually.

Master. All things are possible to him that calleth upon and trusteth in God, *For the Lord is near unto all them that call upon him in Truth and Sincerity.* And he has moreover taught us by a Parable from his own Mouth, how we ought *Always to Pray and not to faint.* O my Friend! *Pray* unto him with Constancy, and Importunity: So will he perform the Desires of thy Soul, and will save thee, after that thou art humbled to the last Extremity. If thou canst not always pray Vocally, yet pray always Mentally and Spiritually; having always an holy Desire and Pious Purpose unto Prayer. A constant good Disposition of Service and Obedience, is our acceptable and continual Sacrifice offer'd up unto God upon the Altar of the Heart. He *prayeth* always, who always *doth well*. He who grieveth for Evil past, and groaneth panting for Good to come, prays without ceasing. Say thou, with holy

David, My Desire (O Lord) is with thee, and my Groaning is not hid from thee. Thou Psal. xxxviii. seeft, O Lord, what I desire : And my Sighs are all numbred by thee ; not one of them is forgotten, or unobserved, by thee.

Disciple. Yea, my Desire is with Christ, but my Flesh fainteth : And my secret Groaning is not hid from God ; yet am I still distracted nevertheless about many things, and want the true Recollection of Mind. How may this be obtained ?

Master. The Word of God and holy Reading is very profitable to recollect the Mind, distracted about many things, or oppressed with any Passion : Reading sheweth thee the right way of Conversation ; Example provoketh thee unto Imitation ; and Prayer obtaineth for thee the most excellent Grace of Perfection, which is Charity. To read of God is good ; to pray unto God better : But to obey him best of all, For the best of all Sacrifices is *Obedience* : And this is indeed an effectual and habitual Prayer, which pierces Heaven, and is a sweet Incense in the Nostrils of the Almighty.

Blessed is he who directs all his Words and Works unto the Glory of God, as unto the end of Blessedness, that God may be all in all, and blessed above all, and praised of all throughout all Ages. Lo ! This is to pray, without ceasing, the most acceptable Prayer.

How can a Christian be called devout, who delighteth more in idle Chat, than in reading or Praying ? Surely nothing is more contrary to Devotion, or Spiritual Recollection, than wandring outwards, and seeking Diversion in the World.

He who hath a willing Ear to hear, and a ready Tongue to talk of Vanity, sells his Soul for nought : And, whatever he thinks of himself, is a Fool in grain.

In all times of Troubles and Temptations, address thy self unto Prayer, as unto a safe Harbour, imploring
ring

ring the Divine Assistance; the sooner the better, the later the worse; the more frequently the more profitable, the more fervently, the more acceptable it is unto God.

Our Merciful and Gracious God will be called upon: He giveth us occasion to pray, and promiseth to hear our Payers, saying, *Ask and it shall be given unto you*: He exhorts us with Words, excites us by Examples, threatens us with Rods, allures us with Rewards, chastises us with Evil, cheers us with Good: And to the Morning and the Evening is but one Day. God also doth give that Sense of inward Sweetness, to such as pray devoutly, wait patiently in secret, and be piously silent; which he denieth to idle Bablers, and extravagant Wanderers.

He who desireth to hear good News, let him listen unto *Christ*, speaking of the Kingdom of God, and of the Judgment to come, of the Heavenly *Jerusalem*, of the Happiness of the Citizens above, of the Orders and Choirs of Angels, of the Glory and Honour of all the First born and Elect of God, of the Rewards and Pleasures of all Saints, whose Joys are everlasting, and whose Kingdom is World without end. Let him hear the *Prophets*, declaring the Mysteries of Christ, and thundering out Threatnings against obstinate and impenitent Sinners: Let him hear the *Apostles* and the *Evangelists*, preaching the great Works and Miracles of Christ: Let him hear the sweet Discourses of the holy *Fathers* and Doctors of the Church, whether Preaching powerfully, in their Sermons; or, in their Commentaries, expounding the more obscure places of Holy Writ; or, in their Tracts of Piety and Devotion, excellently adorning in themselves, and forming in others, the Christian Life; or lastly, in their Apologetical Discourses for the Faith, confuting those Errors and Heresies, which are as the Tares sprung up in the Field of the Church.

Let

Let every one here take what is most for his Turn, what best suits with his Capacity, or State, and wherewith he is principally delighted and affected. But above all, let him take heed not to despise what is simple and plain: Nor to reprehend those things which he understands not; as being indeed too deep and profound for him. For it is the Mark of a Fool to be blaming the Wise: And the Property of the Unholy to be carping at the Holy ones of God. Nothing for certain is more silly, tho' nothing more common, than such a Procedure as this: And nothing also in it self more unjust and unequal.

For there is not sure a greater Injustice than to censure excellent Persons, and Friends of God, for what we know little or nothing of; merely perhaps upon some Prejudices taken up at second Hand, and by hearsay: As there is not at the same time a more ridiculous (as well as presumptuous) piece of Folly, than for the Wit of Man to judge the Wisdom of God, or than for a Man born blind to read Lectures upon Light and Colours. Lo! Every Man is *born Blind*.

III. Labour first humbly to learn and truly to fulfil the *lesser* Acts of Piety and Religion, and God will quickly (if his Wisdom see it necessary for thee) reveal unto thee *greater*. Where there is much Knowledge, there much is required; he who knoweth to do well, and doth it not, unto him not to do it is a Sin. He then who knoweth and readeth a great deal, and practiseth not those things, he knoweth and hath learned, departeth an empty, hungry, and starved Person, from a plentiful and sumptuous Feast.

1. Wherefore let thine Ear be now open, and let thy Heart be lifted up to God without being tir'd.

2. He who prayeth little, and practiseth less, must needs remain cold and poor.

3. He

3. He who disputeth against Vices, but resisteth them not, casteth good Seed amongst Thorns.

4. He gathereth little Fruit from many Words, who fortifieth not his Heart against evil Thoughts.

5. Happy Soul which strictly keeps it self from all Impurity; and suffers nothing to lie hid in the Heart, which may secretly offend the pure Eyes of God.

6. Humble *Confession of Sins* is a Purgation of all Vices in a lowly and contrite Heart before God.

7. A Devout Person is delighted in Prayer, the Studious in Books, the Vertuous in Vertues; the Proud is pleased in Honour, the Humble even in Disdain; the Rich in Possessions, and the Poor in Dependencies; and the Covetous in his Chests, and the Beggar in Alms; the Glutton in Meats and Drinks, and the Sober in Abstinence; the Fool in his Folly, and the Wise in Wisdom; but the Love of God and a good Conscience delight and chear the Heart above all.

8. If thou wilt overcome the wicked Enemies of thy Soul, retire thy self; be silent and quiet, pray, fast, study, wrestle, labour.

9. An holy Man meditateth upon holy Things, speaketh Truth, worketh Righteousness, contemneth Earth, and contemplateth Heaven.

10. An humble Man hearkeneth unto Counsels; a wise Man guardeth against Perils; a patient Man meekly beareth Troubles; a diligent Man neglecteth not his Calling.

11. He who heedeth not small Evils, shall be sure to fall into greater.

12. He who is coldish in the Morning, seldom grows hot in the Evening.

13. He who betimes casteth off Sluggishness, and betaketh himself to Labour, acquireth Joy and great Honour; if not of Men, yet undoubtedly of God; Which is more to be wished, and prefer'd of all Men; forasmuch

forasmuch as he himself is the Reward and Crown of all good Deeds and Labours of all the Saints.

14. A vicious Person is never satisfied with his own Delights, whereas he that is vertuous will sometimes abridge himself even of what is lawful.

15. He standeth firmly, and walketh uprightly, who groundeth himself in Humility; and valueth as nothing all the Honours of the World.

16. He is truly wise, and acts wisely, who applieth himself to please God only, fleeth Exterior, seeketh Interior, desireth Celestial, disdaineth and despiseth all Terrestrial things; and always preferreth the *Love of God* to all.

C H A P. XIV.

The Praise of Charity, and the Fruits of it.

Let all things be done in Charity, 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

Charity is a noble Vertue and supereminent above all other Vertues, Sciences and Gifts. She embraceth God, and associateth Angels with Men, and makes the Sons of Men the Sons of God, and Friends of Saints. She caused Christ to be born of a Virgin, and to suffer Death upon the Cross for a Man's Salvation: She purifieth the Soul from Sin, and draweth it up with the whole Heart, Affection and Understanding unto the Love of God; and filleth and enflameth it with wonderful Sweetness. She maketh Sinners Righteous, Servants Free, Enemies Friends, Strangers Citizens, unknown Familiar, inconstant Stable, proud Humble, perverse Meek, Covetous Liberal, earthly Heavenly, and Idiots Wise. Charity shed abroad in the Hearts of the Faithful, worketh all these

these Effects, by the holy Spirit given them from Heaven. Charity hath most large and long Wings; she flieth over the Cherubims and Seraphims, and all the holy Company of Angels; she joineth things above with things below, passeth through the middle, returns to the top, and of many makes One; she filleth with rejoicings all and every one who glorieth not vainly in himself, but extendeth himself above himself in the Love of God.

Charity compasseth about Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and dry Land, and whatsoever she seeth in any Creature referreth it wholly to the Praise and Glory of God the Creator: For there is nothing so mean or vile in the World, in which the goodness of God, the work of the Artificer, the Power of the Creator, the Wisdom of the Disposer, the Providence of the most excellent Moderator, manifestly appeareth not. This Consideration maketh the devout Soul to praise God; yea, even to leap and sing for Joy at all times, and in all Places: By this she burneth within, as Wax melting before the Fire, and keepeth no mean; but mounteth often over the Lights of Heaven, that she may find out her dearly and only Beloved, the Maker and Governour of all things, to the end that she may solace her self most happily, and repose her self most securely in him.

Disciple, O how sweetly and comfortably fareth it with him, unto whom it is given to cleave close unto God, and to enjoy him in the secret Recess of his Heart! O that it were lawful for me to have but a Taste and Glimpse of that that Angels see Clearly and Everlastingly?

Master. But we must return unto an *Active Life*, O Soldier of Christ, and fight courageously against our assiduous Temptations, by the Force and Vertue of Charity; for after Mourning followeth Mirth; after Sadness, Solace; after Tears, Laughter; after Anxiety, Peace

Peace and Tranquillity: So also, in this State, after Mirth returns Mourning; and great Consolation is attended with grievous Desolation, or urgent Temptation, or Vexation of Men, or Substraction of Friends, or Invasion of Enemies, or Trouble of Mind, or Derision of Little Ones, or Incredation of great Ones: All these things come to pass, in order to beat down the Pride of our Hearts, and to teach us to Compassionate the Weak, Afflicted, and Tempted Ones.

Let us not therefore trust in our selves, nor intermeddle in Matters too high for us, nor seek our own Profit only, or a private Interest: But in all things let us humble our selves, submitting our selves in true Charity to God, and to our Brethren and Sisters for God's sake.

Charity brought God unto Men, and reduces Men unto God: By Charity God came into the World; and by Charity he brought back Man into Heaven: By Charity Christ descended to sinful Man; and by Charity and the Cross, he ascended to his Father.

Charity is never idle: For she worketh great and sublime Things, and doth also willingly submit herself unto base and abject Offices: She lovingly performeth honourable Actions, and is delighted out of Obedience to be enjoined such as are more vile. Charity abhorreth not to touch the unfavoury Sores of the Sick, to wash their Feet, to make their Beds, to purge their Vestments, to cleanse their Filthiness: She bears Grievances patiently; and takes even Pleasure in Reproaches: When she is persecuted, she Rejoices; and to be Crucified with Christ, she counts all Glory.

As Fire consumeth Wood, so doth Charity extinguish Vice: For it cleanseth the Heart by Contrition, washeth it by Confession, purifieth it by Prayer, illuminateth it by holy Reading, enflameth it by devout Meditation, collecteth it and draweth it inwards by secret Habitation, and uniteth it to God by fervent Love.

Charity exciteth the Tongue to glorifie God, the Hands to perform Acts of Piety, the Feet to walk in the Ways of Righteousness, the Eyes to behold and contemplate the Works of God, the Memory to record his loving-kindness, the exterior Members to serve him, and the interior Gifts to love him above all the Good in Heaven and Earth:

Charity blotteth out all Sins past in an humble Soul, and muniteth it against those that are to come: She instructeth it touching things present; freeth it from many Doubts, with-holdeth it from Curiosities; loppeth off Superfluities, excludeth Vanities, reproveth Falsities, hateth Filthiness, mitigateth harshness, cleareth Obscurities, revealeth Divine Mysteries to him that Prayeth, and ordereth all things well both Within and Without.

Charity is *the Good-will* (or pious Disposition) *in an holy Soul, which desists not from well-order'd Operations; albeit sometimes Weakness or Necessity may not permit to do the Good it desires or aims at:*

O happy pure Soul, unto whom God is All in All! Which thinketh nothing sweet or precious; but all things bitter and burthensome without God: Such an one God requireth, such an one God loveth, who despiseth and relinquisheth himself, and all things for Love of him, who striveth manfully, and keepeth his Heart watchfully in all Purity: That Soul doth quickly and freely pass unto God, without Impediment of any Creature, which desireth not the Profit nor Preferment of the World. The Love of Christ looseth all the Bonds of the World, maketh all Burthens light; causeth us to use all diligence faithfully to accomplish the Will of God in all things; and with Christ to pray and say, *Father, not my Will, but thy Will be done always, and every where:*

Disciple. Amen, Amen:

C H A P. XV.

Of Watchful Care and Labour to be used against Temptations.

Resist the Devil, and he will flee from thee, Jam. iv.

Master. **W**Here-ever a good Man shall be employed in godly Exercises, as in Prayer, Meditation, Reading, Writing, &c. there are the holy Angels rejoicing with him, and there are Evil Spirits tempting and distracting him.

When thou beginnest to Pray, the Devils fly from thee, as from the Lightning of the Holy Ghost; and when thou fallest again into idle Chat, they all return suddenly to raise vain Rumours to entertain thee.

Remain therefore in Silence, and think on God for thy Delight; for thou shalt be free from Weariness in Well-doing, and persevere in the good thou hast begun.

Be faithful in a little, and thou shalt gain ten thousand Talents in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Be not Idle in private, nor talkative in publick, and thou shalt vanquish the Devil, and put him to flight: For he hateth Labour and Silence, Prayer and Meditation of Good.

Wheresoever thou shalt be, either alone or in Company, it behoveth thee to strive, to watch and pray against the Temptations of the Flesh and Evil Spirit.

Strive valiantly, Pray fervently, Labour diligently, Study fervently, keep Silence willingly, and Suffer patiently, hope in the Lord always, how great soever thy Tribulation or Desolation be.

He who disposeth himself in all Places, and all Times, unto Patience, shall enjoy greater Peace, and triumph over his Adversaries here, and hereafter obtain a more honourable Crown of Glory with the Elect of God.

C H A P. XVI.

Of Fraternal Bearing one another's Burthen.

Bear ye one another's Burthens, Gal. vi.

BEcause indeed we are all one in Christ, we ought therefore to keep Brotherly Charity in the Bond of Peace, and a constant Agreement in good : We are all the Members of Christ, Regenerated in Baptism by the Grace of the Holy Ghost, Redeemed by the Passion of Christ, Purified by the Blood of Christ, Refreshed by the Body of Christ, Instructed by the Works of Christ, Confirmed by the Miracles of Christ, and Edified by the Examples of Christ.

Why therefore (my Brethren) do you injure one another ? He who wrongeth his Brother, either in Word or Deed, offendeth Christ, and Christ will revenge it.

We have all one Father in Heaven ; we are all Brethren in Christ, from whatsoever City or Country we are here assembled ; or from what Parentage soever, Noble or Ignoble, we are descended : One God created us all, the same God nourisheth and governeth us all ; and he hath called us all to one and the self same Happines, and doth continually call us hereunto, both by outward Vocation, and by inward Contrition ; who hath promised us the sight of his Divine Essence for our Reward in the Presence of
his

his Angels, with the unanimous Felicity of all the Saints above. If therefore we are called of one God, and have all one Price of our Redemption, which is Christ; one new Birth by the Holy Ghost; let us all study to love and serve one another.

If we desire to please Christ, let us be helpful one to another for Christ's sake, and out of Charity pray one for another; for by this means God is in us, and we are in God. Hence whatsoever Imperfections, or Unaptness we see or hear of in others, let us give a pious and charitable Interpretation of it, as we desire should be done of our selves.

O beloved Brother! bear, and thou shalt be born withal; excuse, and thou shalt be excused; shew Pity, and thou shalt find Compassion; Comfort such as are afflicted, and thou shalt be comforted of him that rejoiceth; Raise him that is fallen, and thou shalt be lifted up by the help of God: As thou shalt do unto another, so shall it be even done unto thee by him that judgeth righteously.

Be not stricken with Wonder, nor transported with Indignation; if a frail *Man* fall in the World, when an *Angel* fell in Heaven, *Adam* in Paradise overcome of a little Apple.

Many times a very little thing procureth Man great Temptation in himself, and no less Vexation from another. God doth justly permit it to fall out so, to the end thou mayst know of a Truth, that if thou canst not overcome small things, thou shalt never be able to overcome greater.

Demean thy self gently towards thy Brother in Temptation, and pray for him that is in Affliction as for thy self; thy good is my good by Congratulation, and my evil is thy evil by Compassion: For all of us are weak Men, and therefore are all of us bound in Love to assist one another with our mutual Prayers; since no Man upbraideth the defect of another,

with the neglect of his own : For if a sinful Man should despise another Man for Sin, it is all one as if a Blind Man should play upon a Blind Man, a Deaf curse a Deaf Man, or a Fool laugh a Fool to scorn.

Forbear to detract or censure another, which is not lawful for thee to do ; and have respect rather unto, and correct thine own Evil Deeds : If thou wouldest not fail in thy Judgment, and desirest to amend thy Neighbour, begin with thy self ; and then proceed not roughly and angrily, but modestly and discreetly : If thou lovest me sincerely and brotherly, commiserate me as thy self, and pray for me. He who reproveth another, and in the mean while neither prayeth for, nor condoleth with him, is a cruel Enemy ; no conscionable Physician, but a troublesome wrangling Companion. He who prayeth for another as for himself, doth him a twofold good : By how much the more Brotherly Love any Man hath in him, by so much the more willingly doth he pray for another ; that he may throughly amend himself, and not offend the Eyes of the Weak ; therefore is his Sorrow the more, if he will not hear, but grow angry at Admonition. Every Man is to another either a sweet Rose, or a sharp Thorn,

C H A P. XVII.

Of the Love of Christ, and Hatred of the World.

The Beloved, the Master, and the Novice.

Beloved. *Abide in my Love*, John xv.

Master. 1. **T**HE Voice of Christ is sweet to hear,
saving to obey.

2. The Love of Christ is the Pleasure of the Mind,
the

the Paradife of the Soul : It excludeth the World, vanquisheth the Devil, shutteth up Hell, openeth Heaven.

3. The Love of Christ and the World are clean contrary, and have nothing at all common, nor can they abide together.

4. The Love of Christ is the fiery Chariot of *Elias* ascending into Heaven : The Love of the World is the Devil's Waggon, hurling Men down into Hell.

5. Self-love is Self-treason ; and he that seeks himself only, is truly *Felo de se*.

6. The Oblivion of the World, is the Recovery of Heaven ; and the Abdication of that, is as the Inauguration in this.

7. He that saveth, even loseth what he hath ; but he that loseth, certainly findeth it again with much Interest, in the Love of Christ.

8. The flattering Speech of a feigned Friend doth more hurt, than the sharp Reproof of a righteous Man : The Heart of a deceitful Person forgeth Lyes, but the Mind of a just Man measureth things with a right Line.

9. He shall never be free from Shame that slandereth his Neighbour : Neither shall he avoid Scandal, who gives Scandal to another ; but the scandalous Dealer shall be scandalously dealt with.

10. God, who knoweth and ruleth the Hearts of all, suffereth not long his Lambs to stray ; but either revoketh them with the gentle stroke of Fear, or bringeth them home again with the sweet Aspect of Love.

Novice. I have stray'd from thy Ways, *Lord*, as a lost Sheep : O look thou upon me ! O bring me home again into thy Fold, sweet *Jesu* ! I have waited for thy saving Mercy ; O make me to understand the Way of thy *Love* ! that I also may talk of thy wondrous Works, and may come to possess that true Peace

and Quiet of Mind, which is in the Enjoyment of thee.

11. *Master.* Where Peace and Concord is, there is God, and all that's good : Where Strife and Dissension is, there is the Devil, and all that's Evil.

12. Where Humility is, there is Wisdom : But where Pride is, there is the Root of all Wickedness. Subdue Pride, and thy Soul shall be at Peace.

13. Bitter Words do wound the very Bowels of Charity.

14. Solitude and Silence work Quietness : And in keeping them aright, is kept the Sabbath of the Soul.

15. Labour and Diligence profit much the Religious ; without which all will soon be unravell'd again that is well done.

16. Without good Order and great Diligence, neither the best Purposes nor the wisest Institutions can long subsist.

17. Where there is Laughter and dissolute Mirth, there is Devotion made to flee.

18. An idle Person, and full of Words, is seldom pricked in his Heart, seldom free from Offence.

19. Where there is a ready Obedience, there is a joyful Conscience.

20. Where there is much Jangling, there is little Work : Where there is much vain Chat, there is sown nought but Wind ; and poor will be the Harvest.

21. Where a Man's Heart is wholly set to seek his own, there is Charity driven away : Where there is Self-interestedness, there must be want of Love, whatever to the contrary be pretended.

22. Where the Doctrine of Christ flourisheth, there the Safety of the Soul increaseth : Where the Life of Christ groweth, there his Kingdom openeth.

23. Where is Brotherly Concord, there is sweet Melody.

24. Where

24. Where Mediocrity is observed, there the Virtue of Agreement or Unanimity is best preserved.

25. Where Discretion is used in Reproof of Sin, there no Man can justly complain, nor enter into Indignation with him that is set over him. Whereupon one well said :

** In all things use a Mean ; observe it ever,
Mediocrity and Virtue go together.*

26. Where is Patience, there is a great Conquest over the Enemy.

27. Where Trouble entereth, from thence Peace quickly departeth.

28. Shut the Door of thy Mouth, and ponder well thy Words before thou speak.

29. Where is Faithfulness and Verity, there is assurance of Peace.

30. Where is Fraud and Maliciousness, there is foolish Imagination and blind Prudence.

31. Where is Charity, there is the Holy Ghost.

32. Where is light Suspicion, there is frequent Indignation.

33. Where is Knowledge of the Truth, there is Joy to the upright in Heart.

34. Where is an humble Confession, there is an easy obtaining of Pardon.

35. Where Humane Wisdom faileth, there the Divine Protection is the more to be invoked.

36. He who maliciously covereth his Wickedness, shall be sure to have an ill End ; but unto him that worketh Righteousness, and disposeth himself unto Patience, belongeth much Peace.

37. Wo unto him that is without Fear, impious in Evil, and fictitious in Good ; because his Iniquity

** Omnibus adde Modum : Modus est pulcherrima Virtus.*

hurteth no Man more, than his Hypocrisy doth himself.

38. Where is double-heartedness, there is Unconstancy and much Wickedness.

39. It fares well with the simple and sincere in Heart; because God is with them, and directeth all their Works in a right Way.

40. He who regardeth not his Word, who will easily believe him? But he who changeth his Word for the better, doth not infringe the Word of Truth.

41. It is delightful to *hear* Good, but it is laudable to *do* Good. The best Task we can undertake is the Amendment of Life: The best Conference is the Consultation of Wisdom.

42. The Fruit of good Conference, is to abstain from Sin, and to grow in Grace.

43. The Fruit of devout Prayer, is to unite the Heart to God in the Fervour of the holy Spirit.

44. He prayeth devoutly, who riddeth his Heart from all Vanity.

45. He who meditateth on Christ crucified, doth quickly repel the Illusions of the Devil.

46. The continual Remembrance of Christ's Passion, is the Soul's sweetest Cogitation.

47. He who daily pondereth the sacred Wounds of his Saviour, reckoneth all earthly things as Dung, and desireth not the Honours of the World, getteth a clean Heart, and serveth God, without Impeachment.

48. He praiseth and honoureth God highly, who humbleth himself lowly, and advisedly considereth bewaileth and weepeth for his own Defects.

49. The Voice of a truly contrite Heart, proceeding out of the Mouth of an humble Sinner, maketh a loud Cry in the gracious Ears of God Almighty.

50. Whatsoever Good thou dost, do it to the Praise of God.

51. He

51. He who simply, intirely, purely, and freely referreth all his own and others good Deeds unto the Honour and Praise of God, ascribing them wholly unto God's Grace, and attributeth nothing unto his own Power or Merit; but doth despise and strip himself naked of all, he trampleth under foot, and utterly destroyeth all Pride, Envy and Vain-glory.

52. But he depriveth himself of Eternal Glory, and Honour, who glorieth in himself, and not in God the chiefeft Good: And therefore that holy Apostle St. Paul saith, *He that thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, deceiveth himself.* He who was wrapt into the Third Heaven, was not proud of it; but whatsoever Good he performed, taught, or dictated, he faithfully ascribed all unto God, saying, *By the Grace of God I am that I am.*

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the Imitation of the most Holy Life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

That which ye have done unto one of my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, Matth. xxv.

MArk his Words, seal up his Mysteries, imitate his Examples.

1. He who relieveth his poor Christian Brother, holdeth fast Christ by the hand.

2. He who beareth with Patience the Burthen that is laid upon his Brother in Christ, supporteth Christ, and him crucified upon his Shoulders.

3. He who speaketh comfortably unto his grieved Brother, saluteth Jesus his Saviour with Kisses of Love.

4. He

4. He who bewaileth another Man's Sin, interceeding with Tears for his Pardon, doth wash and wipe his Saviour's Feet.

5. He who pacieth an angry Brother, makes a Bed of Flowers to lodge Christ in his Soul.

6. He who provideth for his Brother better than himself, feedeth Christ with the choicest Delicates, and giveth him the Honey-comb to suck.

7. He who taketh up good Meditations concerning GOD, and Divine Objects, thereby doth receive Christ into the Bed of his Heart.

8. He who offers to his Brother a Religious Book, doth drink unto Christ in a Cup of choice Wine.

9. He who hindreth vain Babbling at Meals, sca- reth the Flies from Christ's Table.

10. He who refuseth to hear Detractions, and reproveth dishonest and immodest Talk, driveth away the Black Dog from Christ's House.

11. He who heareth of other Mens Faults, and grieveth for them, toucheth and anointeth the sacred Wounds of Christ.

12. He who declareth the good Examples, and vertuous Actions of his Neighbour, presenteth fair, lovely Flowers to Christ's Eyes.

13. He who readeth and preacheth devoutly Christ's Words, sprinkleth sweet Spices in the Ears of his Auditors.

14. He who sustaineth and excuseth other Mens Failings, shall easily obtain Mercy at Christ's hand.

15. He who concealeth the Infamy and Offence of his Neighbour, bestows Garments on the naked Members of Christ.

16. He who doth seriously think upon, and sweetly ruminate in his Heart the Divine Miracles, and lowly Works of Christ, receiveth Honey and Milk from the Mouth of Christ.

17. He who prayeth devoutly, abstaineth from Delicacies, and renounceth his own Worthiness, offereth with the wise Men three precious Gifts unto Christ.

18. He who secretly retires himself unto his Devotion, goeth with Christ into the Desert.

19. He who resisteth Sin, and mortifieth his Earthly Members, keepeth a Fast with Christ.

20. He that at the Table hath the Eye of his Mind fixt on the Spiritual and Heavenly Food, eateth and drinketh with Christ.

21. He who discourseth religiously with his Brother, preacheth the Kingdom of God with Christ.

22. He who prayeth faithfully for the distressed and tempted, visiteth *Lazarus* with Christ, and weepeth with *Martha* and *Mary*.

23. He who treasureth up in his Heart the Words of Christ, when he sitteth at Meals, and secretly cheweth and pondereth upon them, doth with the Beloved Disciple lie in his Bosom at Supper.

24. He who in such things as are disagreeable and contrary to him humbly and readily obeyeth, doth truly follow Jesus with his Disciples to Mount *Olivet*, where he was betrayed and seized.

25. He who in Tribulation and Temptation instantly and fervently prayeth, doth with Jesus, in his Agony, fight with the Devil.

26. He who doth wholly renounce his own Will, performeth gladly with Christ the Will of his Father : And beareth his Cross unto Mount *Calvary*.

27. He who prayeth for his Adversaries, and willingly pardoneth such as offend him, intercedeth with Christ for his Enemies, that they should not perish, but be converted unto God and live.

28. He that heartily renounces all the things of the World for the Love of God, and can be contented even with an utter Oblivion of them, may be said

to die with Christ on the Cross, and with *Paul* to be caught into Paradise.

29. He that keeps his Heart clean, and quiet, has prepared clean Linnen to lay the Body of Jesus in.

30. He who persevereth in the Service of Christ unto the end sweetly sleepeth and reposeth himself with Christ in the Sepulchre.

31. He who layeth up all the Words and Acts of Christ, and doth ruminate upon them, he prepareth for him sundry kinds of sweet Spices, which will be very prevalent for the Comfort of his afflicted Soul.

32. He who returneth humble and devout Thanks for the Blessings he hath received, he carrieth with *Mary Magdalen* sweet Spices unto the Sepulchre of Christ.

33. He who after Contrition putteth on a firm Resolution to amend his Life, riseth again with Christ from the Death of Sin.

34. He who casteth from him the Dulness and Foulness of his Disposition, and quickeneth himself with the Heat and Fervour of Devotion, celebrateth a new Spiritual Passover with Christ, and joyfully beareth a part with him in that Song *Hallelujah*.

35. He who contemneth all Terrene Joys, flieth from Dangers, seeketh and accepteth a Religious Life; he goes with Christ and his Disciples into a secret Chamber that he may there serve God the more freely, live more holily, and receive a greater Measure of the holy Spirit.

36. He who neglecteth all Temporal Things, and is wholly enflamed with the Meditation of Heavenly, he mounteth and ascendeth with Christ into Heaven.

37. Blessed is the Soul which accounteth it Gain to live and die with Christ.

38. He must die unto himself, who desireth to live unto Christ; he must relinquish all fading Vanities,
who

who will taste of the Wisdom and Sweetness of Christ.

39. There is Sorrow in Living, and Grief in Dying; but with Christ is Eternal Life and Safety.

Disciple. *Oh when will the time come that I may enjoy God perfectly, and be wholly united unto him! For so long as the faithful Soul is not united unto God in Glory, it cannot be fully blessed.*

Master. Wherefore follow thou Christ with the Footsteps of Love in thy Life, by Faith, warm'd with Charity, that thou mayst be made worthy to behold God Face to Face; and partake of the Beatitude of Angels.

Master and Disciple. *To which blessed Vision, vouchsafe, O Lord Jesus Christ, to bring us all; who hast suffered for us all, the most bitter, shameful, painful and accursed Death of the Cross. Amen.*

C H A P. XIX.

Of the Eternal Praise of God.

His Praise is ever in my Mouth, Psal. xxxiv.

Master. **O**H sweet Voice in the Ears of all devout Persons, but sweeter in the Presence of God and his holy Angels. If all the Instruments of Musick were sounded out at once, and should not resound the Glory and Praise of God, well they might make a confused Noise and Jangling, but they could never recreate or satisfy an holy Soul; for it is expedient that God and his Honour be the Cause of all our Mirth; but then all Vanity must be utterly excluded; if we look to have our praising of God grateful and acceptable.

If the purpose of thy Heart be sincere, then thou mayst rejoice and sing cordially and truly with the blessed Virgin *Mary*; saying, *My Soul doth magnify the LORD; and my Spirit rejoice in God my JESUS.*

Oh what a sweet Harmony it makes in Heaven and Earth, when Man and every Creature with a pure Heart, and unanimous Consent, set forth the Praises of God for his immense Goodness, and excellent Magnificence! Verily, a most pleasant delectable Work it is to glorify God at all times, to love the Creator of all things, and to celebrate with highest Honour the liberal Donor of Eternal Life; for truly the Life, Glory, and Honour of the blessed Angels, is a continual, constant, and indefatigable Act of glorifying God, with sincere, hearty and most intimate Affections, without all Tincture or Touch of Vain-glory.

This also do the Souls of all Saints perform in their Celestial Country, being freed from the Fetters of the Body and Snares of Satan, secured from all Temptations, united to God in perfect Charity, and replenished by Virtue of this Union with unspeakable Joy and Blessedness. These being there set free, and enlarged, do revolve with great Contentment, and with abundance of Pleasure and Sweetness do reflect in what Tribulation and Afflictions they sometimes were; and how great Perils and Temptations they escaped and vanquished in the World: But now all their Accents of Sorrow are turned into Joy, and the Grievousness of their Crosses adds a glorious Lustre unto their Crowns. Their Lamentation is made a Jubilee: The Thorns which so pricked them here are all changed into Roses.

Oh how blessed is that Country, where is all Peace, no Sadness; all Pleasure, and all things full of divine Praises and melodious Songs.

Bless therefore, O thou faithful Soul, the Lord of Heaven ! Praise thy God, O Sion, while thou art here sighing and groaning under the Weight of thy sinful Flesh ! Call upon Jesus in this place of Trial, that he may vouchsafe thee a place with his holy Angels : Pray that the Devil's Assault may not prevail against thee, neither the Wantonness of thine own Flesh deceive thee, nor the Labour of thy Body discourage thee : Put thy Shoulder to the Burthen of the Cross for Christ's sake, who will open unto thee the Gates of the Kingdom. What dost thou more desire ?

The high Royal Way to go unto Christ, is to subdue thy own Will, to sustain Loss, and not to seek the Contentments of the Flesh. Know assuredly thou shalt have Eternal Rest for a little Labour, Eternal Honour for an humble State and low Degree. Let the Praises of God therefore be always in thy Mouth, in Prosperity and Adversity ; for by this means mayst thou profit thy self much, if thou make a plenary Resignation of thy self unto the Will of God.

Whatsoever Grief, inward or outward, shall befall thee, entertain it piously and meekly, as coming from the hand of a most gracious Creator, who provideth for all, little and great : For he who made thee after his own Image, will be sure to take care of thee in time of need, for his own tender Mercies sake.

Open therefore thy Mouth in the Praises of Almighty God, whose Providence governeth all things, both in Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all the Depths. Glorify thy *Creator*, who made thee a Man, and not a Beast ; and if he had made thee a Fly, he had done nothing amiss, but had been worthy to be praised. The Lion cannot boast of his Strength against a Fly or Gnat ; for although the Lion can roar, and make an hideous Noise, yet he cannot soar aloft like a Fly : He may cry louder, but cannot raise himself so high.

Wherefore

Wherefore let there be no Strife between great and small, rich and poor, strong and weak, wise and simple, Master and Servant; but let us all alike Praise the Lord our God; who hath created with such wonderful Beauty and Variety, all Creatures in their several Orders, for the Glory and Honour of his own Name, and for publick Demonstration of his Love and Liberality unto Mankind.

Magnifie (O faithful Soul!) thy *Redeemer*, who hath ransom'd thee out of the hand of the Destroyer; and vanquished Death by his bitter Passion; whose Merit indeed thou canst not worthily give thanks for, no not if thou wert able to die, and be crucified a thousand times for him: All would be vastly, infinitely short of the Thanks due to him.

Praise thy *Protector*, who hath kept thee from many dangerous Sins: and who continueth to *protect* thee from the Evil which surroundeth thee.

Glorify thy *Benefactor*, who hath so magnified and multiplied his Benefits upon thee; *Opening his Hand; and filling thee with Blessing* day by day.

Behold yet still he entertaineth thee with new Gifts, and cometh unto thee also himself in the holy Sacrament, where he communicateth unto thee Himself, and all his Benefits: For all these, he requireth nothing of thee, nor receiveth any thing so lovingly from thee, as the Purity and Sincerity of thy Love, and Thankfulness returned; with Praises offered up unto him; which, for his own infinite Goodness sake, he is graciously pleased to accept.

When thy Heart shall be cheered with the prosperous Success of thine Affairs, or with the Internal Consolation of his Grace, give him Thanks and Praise, because he hath vouchsafed out of his tender Affection to comfort thee, lest thou should'st faint in the Way. For as often as thou readest, or hearest the Word of God, and meditatest devoutly upon the Incarnation

and Passion of Christ; so often doth he send thee Bread from Heaven to refresh thy Soul.

When Sicknes or Sadnes shall seize upon thee, praise and thank him likewise; because he then visiteth, proveth, and purgeth thee, lest thou grow proud and forget him; and presume too much upon thy self; for the Affliction of the Body oftentimes draws the Heart to Compunction. When thou shalt be Healthful and Strong, let him have the Thanks and Praise, because he hath given thee Strength to labour and assist others; that so thou may'st spend no time idly.

When thou walkest in thy Garden or Orchard, and seest sundry Trees laden with several kinds of pleasant Fruits, with other excellent variety of delightful Plants, and odoriferous Flowers, as Roses, Lilies, and the like, all fair, fresh, and flourishing: Forget not then to render thanks unto him, because he hath manifested unto thee his great and marvellous Works, by the Production and Fruitfulness of the Earth, which he reneweth yearly by his wonderful Power and Wisdom; out of his mere Bounty, for the Utility of Men, and for a natural Figure unto thee of the Resurrection.

In every place therefore, and at all times, praise God, and give him Thanks, because the Earth is full of his Majesty, and his Glory is above the Heavens.

Praise the Lord all ye his Saints on Earth, whose Praise all the Angels of Heaven sing without ceasing.

If thou praise God, thou resemblest the Angels; if thou praise him not, thou art Ingrateful, and worse than brute Beasts.

Consider how the Birds fly in the Air, the Fishes swim in the Sea, all Cattle cry, and all the Elements move in their Order, to the Praise of God, and do demonstrate by their Natural Motions, the Magnificence of their Creator.

In all thy Thoughts therefore set God before thine Eyes ; beware thou do not offend him ; return him Thanks for all his Benefits ; and at the end of every one of thy Works ; conclude with hearty Thanks to God, and say, *Glory be to God, now and ever.* Let every thing that hath Breath praise the Lord.

Then the Disciple Praised God with the Master ; and Rejoiced exceedingly in the Lord his Saviour : And they both said, Amen.

CHAPTER XX.

The Soul's Aspiration.

Disciple. O God, my Soul thirsteth after thee, Psal. lxxiii.

O Had I of his Love but part ;
That chosen was by God's own Heart !
Then would I neither Giant fear,
Nor Lion, that my Soul wou'd tear,
No Passions shou'd my Spirit vex,
Nor Sorrow once my Mind perplex ;
But I shou'd still all Glory give
Unto my God ; by whom I live :
And to the Glory of his Name,
Wou'd this throughout the World proclaim.
My Walk shou'd be but in his Ways,
My Talk but only in his Praise ;
My Life a Death ; but in his Love ;
My Death a Life for him to prove ;
My Care to keep a Conscience clean ;
My Will from Wicked Thoughts to wean ;
My Pain, a Pleasure ; Travel, Ease :
My God thus in all things to Please.
Nor Earth, nor Heaven shou'd me move ;
But still my Lord shou'd be my Love.

If I were *Sick*, he were my *Health* ;
If I were *Poor*, he were my *Wealth* :
If I were *Weak*, he were my *Strength* ;
If Dead, he were my *Life* at length ;
If *Scorn'd*, he only were my *Grace* ;
If *Banished*, he my *Resting-place* :
If *Wrong'd*, he only were my *Right* ;
If *Sad*, he were my Soul's *Delight*.
In Sum, and All, All-only he,
Shou'd be All, *above* All, to me.

Then the Master, said to the Disciple in this manner ;
Thou hast made a good Choice, my Son ; and the
Breathings of thine Heart are doubtless accepted be-
fore the Most High. Now therefore according
to thy Resolution thus made, even so be it. The
Way is prepared for thee to Walk in : Yea his Path
is made *Strait* ; see that thou depart not from it.

C H A P. XXI.*The Strait Way.*

Master. *The Way of the Just is Uprightness*, Isa. xxvi.

D. THE Way of the Righteous is made strait,
and the Journey of the Saints is prepared.

M. How ?

D. By Dolour and Labour. This is that Way we
travel to Heaven by.

M. Is there not another Way to Life everlasting ?

D. No. The only strait Way is that of the
Cross.

M. Is it so ?

D. It is so verily; Christ has taught this Way by his Word; and by his holy Example has chalk'd it out to be followed by all. This all the Saints have walked in after his Steps, even unto the Death, according to that saying of the Lord; *Enter ye in at the Strait Gate, which leadeth unto Life.*

M. O devout Soul, what dost thou in the Closet?

D. I Read, I Write, I gather Honey.

M. Thou hast well said; for the Closet of the Devout Christian ought to be employed fervently about holy Books, godly Meditation, and such other holy Exercises and Labours. Well, what dost thou in the Church?

D. I confess my Sins before God; I render him Thanks for all his Benefits; I sing forth his most worthy Praise; I hear his most holy Word; and to conclude, I ask of him, in the Communion of all Saints, whatever is requisite and needful for Body and Soul, glorifying him in all, and for all that I receive at his Hands.

M. Thou hast well answered; for these are the true Ends of going to Church. Confession, Thanksgiving and Praise, with hearing the Holy Scriptures read and preached, do here challenge our Time; not omitting such other Addresses of Supplication and Intercession as are suited to our Necessities, and are becoming the Divine Majesty to grant. But of all the Publick Service, the principal seems to be the Lauds, and the Singing or Reading the *Psalms* with a Voice of Jubilee. For here ought God to be praised with Heart and Mouth, even as it is in Heaven. For as it is meet and right at all Times, and in all Places too, to use this *Heavenly* Exercise; so ought we most chiefly so to do, when we are assembled for this very End in the Church. And hence it is not without good Ground subjoined, *Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we Laud, &c.*

D. With

D. With these truly I laud and magnify God's Glorious Name, in the publick Congregation; and therefore do I also sing, *To thee all Angels cry aloud, the Heavens and all the Powers therein.*

M. What dost thou at the Table?

D. I both Eat and Drink in remembrance of my Saviour, and offer up the Creatures upon the Altar of his Cross; presenting as well my Body as my Soul to be a reasonable Sacrifice unto him.

M. It is well answered of thee; for this ought to be the ultimate End of our Natural Food. But, pray, *what* dost thou eat?

D. The *Gall* of Christ. I ruminate upon his Wounds; I condole, I cast up their Number, and I then one by one bewail them.

M. Thou hast well ruminated in thy Mind upon it; for nothing could be ever more just than this Thought of thine. Since the Table of the Poor ought to be principally employ'd about the Poverty and Sufferings of Christ, with giving of Thanks. But what eatest thou here besides?

D. There is sometimes given me, by the Grace of my Heavenly Father, a certain *hidden Manna*; which I am no wise able to describe. But this I know, that it has in it all variety of Savours, according as the Palate is which tastes it.

M. It is true that thou hast said: And blessed art thou in being so highly favoured as to taste of this spiritual Food; which will strengthen thee for thy Journey to that Land of Delights, which I perceive thou art travelling to. But what *Drinkest* thou at Supper?

D. Good Lessons, full of Nectar.

M. Well hast thou answered again. For the Meals of the Devout Christian ought to be accompanied with holy Reading, and drawing the Water of Life out of the Wells of Salvation: Or with some good

and profitable Discourse. For is not the Soul more than the Body? If a good Draught is refreshing in the Mouth, how much more a good Understanding of the Sacred Scripture in the Heart.

C H A P. XXII.

The Guard of the Heart and Mouth.

I said I will take heed to my Ways that I offend not in my Tongue, Psalm. xxxix.

NEver be thou Idle, nor Talkative, nor Curious, nor given to Laughter. Before thy Labour, and in thy Labour, be thou still mindful of the Lord thy God, that he may keep thee in all thy Ways.

Thou art always amongst Enemies, and art amidst the Perils of a tempestuous Sea now toss'd to and fro; therefore must thou pray without ceasing, that thou beest not overcome of the Vices and Passions, and drowned in the Gulf of Desperation.

Stand up stoutly; do not at all flinch in thy daily Combat: But specially have a Care of three Beasts. In the Morning fight against *Sloth*; at Noon against *Gluttony*; at Night against *Fleshly Lust*. The *Dog* will sleep late, the *Wolf* will eat a great deal, the *Ass* will be wanton in lying down. Rouse up the Dog with a *Whip*, beat the Wolf with a *Staff*, scourge the Ass with prickly *Thorns*. The Whip is the Fear of *Death*, the Staff is the Fire of *Hell*, the Thorns the *Passion* of Christ. With these three Weapons are the Vices of the Flesh overcome and subdu'd.

Leave to the World its Vanities: But busie thou thy self in the Way of God. Follow thou Christ silently.

lently. Shut thy Door upon thee, and call into thy Heart Him, who hath so loved thee, as even to lay down his Life for thee.

C H A P. XXIII.

Frequent Invocation of the Name of Christ.

Help me, and so shall I be saved, Psal. cxix.

SEE that thou invoke GOD in every Work, Morning, Noon and Night at least; and so with holy *Daniel* shalt thou be helped in every Necessity, as well of the Body as of the Soul.

Have Jesus in thy Heart; so shalt thou be clean from all Filth. For where He is no Unholiness can abide.

Have his Prayer in thy Spirit, and have it often too in thy Mouth; so shalt thou be filled with the Consolation of the Holy Spirit; who is truly called the Comforter, as thou then wilt find by Experience.

Solitude and Silence, Prayer and Fasting are the Arms of the Spiritual Christian.

To labour in the Day-time, and to watch and pray in the Night, is the special Exercise of the Saints. This is acceptable to God, pleasing to the Angels, and contrary to the Devils; profitable to the Young and delightful to the Aged; to the Slothful it is hard and burthensom, but to the Devout it is light and pleasant, easie and sweet.

When thou canst not watch as thou oughtest, be sure to call upon the Name of JESUS; so shall the Devil, the Enemy of all Good, be made to flee from thee.

When thou canst not sleep for very Sorrow, and all Rest departeth far from thee; endeavour to meditate

rate upon the Land of everlasting Peace, and the Inhabitants thereof; so shalt thou have the good Angel of the Lord present with thee.

When thou art tired with Prayer, be it vocal or mental, strive to ponder and ruminate a little on the Psalms: So shalt thou be fortified by the Holy Ghost, the best Comforter, the inmost Teacher, and the greatest Enlightner of the Heart.

C H A P. XXIV.

The Daily Combat.

The Violent take it by force, Mat. xi.

PUT on therefore the Arms of the holy Cross, fight as a good Soldier, study as an industrious Scholar in Christ's School, pray as a devout Lover, labour as a faithful Servant of God; and thou shalt be in Heaven gloriously crowned.

As one Nail is driven out with another; so is Vice expelled by Virtue. Wrath is restrained by Silence, Gluttony refrained by Fasting, Sloth put to flight by Labour, idle Laughter is dissolved by holy Sorrow, Hatred is slain with Love, and an Enemy is appeased with Kindness.

Peace of Heart is obtained by Patience; and he that lightly reproveth others, falleth easily into Indignation. For to be but a *little* entangled in Business, is the Acquisition of *much* Peace. The Less of the World, the more of Christ.

It is often said, and often it ought to be repeated, that it may be kept well in mind: Nothing is more easie to be said, more blessed to be done, according to Christ's own Words: *If ye know these things, Blessed are ye if ye do them.* Many

Many are full of Words; few can keep Silence. Many are full of Desires, few that are contented with a little. Here is the great Exercise.

No one is fully contented, unless he fully enjoys the Supreme Good.

That is a poor Table where Bread and Salt is wanting; that is an insipid Meal, where Christ, the Bread of Heaven, and Salt of Souls preserving them from Corruption is absent, and God is forgotten; and where vain Words abound. The best Dish for the Soul is the Word of God heard, and well digested. Look up to Heaven with the Eye of Faith, so shalt thou be made to partake of the Bread thereof, and thy Heart shall taste the Sweetness of the Lord.

He is fed with delicious Food, who is delighted with the sacred Books: But he that willingly hears, and seeks after vain Discourse, shall be famished; and shall remain for a long while after dry and undevout.

But O that thy Children, O Lord, might know, and duly at all times consider, that it is *not the Growing of Fruits that nourisheth Man*; but that it is *thy Word*, sustaining and upholding all Creatures, *which preserveth them that put their trust in thee!* And that it is not by the *outward Bread only*, or principally, but *by every Word that proceedeth out of thy Mouth*, that they do live: For the Creature verily is made *obedient to thy Grace, that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that have need*, and that pray unto thee for Food convenient.

Deut. viii.
Matt. iv.
Wisd. xvi.

O that my Children, whom thou lovest, O Lord, might know this, and attend thereto whensoever they eat and drink! And that thou wouldest be present with them, opening thine Hand, and satisfying the Desire of their Souls! Are we not hungry, and thirsty, in the Wilderness? O satisfy us right soon! Satisfie us, lest we faint by the Way; and so enter
not

not into the Rest of thee, our King and our Saviour. So will we utter the Memorial of thy great Goodness; and will sing of thy Love.

C H A P. XXV.

The Soul's best Goods.

I will love thee O Lord, my Virtue, Psal. xviii.

AMong the Noble, that is, such as are Noble indeed, nothing is more noble than Virtue; among the Ignoble, nothing more base than Vice; among the Fair and Beautiful, nothing fairer than Chastity; among the Sciences, nothing higher than Wisdom; among Books of Devotion, nothing more edifying than the *Life of Christ*; among all the Prayers and Praises of God, nothing to be compared with the *Lord's Prayer*.

This holy Prayer excels all the Vows and Desires of the Saints; for in it self it contains all the Sayings of the Prophets, and the mellifluous Words of the Psalms and Canticles, after a most full, but secret manner. It petitions for all things needful; it Praises God most highly; it knits the Soul to God, and lifts her up from the Earth to Heaven; it penetrates the Clouds, and even transcends the Angels. Blessed is he that attentively considers every Word of Christ therein, as in the Name and Spirit of its Author.

By this the Passions are repressed, the Temptations overcome, the Vices healed, the Virtues augmented, the Graces strengthened: Faith by it takes a new Vigour, Hope is established, and Charity becomes both more ardent and more extensive.

The Name of God is thus sanctified in the Will and Understanding; his Kingdom comes into the Soul

Soul in Truth and Peace; his Will is done and fulfilled therein as by the holy Angels in Heaven; the Celestial Manna and the new Name are given; all past Trespases and Transgressions are entirely blotted out; and lastly the Evil one is confounded to see himself so disappointed in his Attacks and Temptations, he being not in the least able to hurt the Praying Christian who thus exercises himself as he is commanded and directed.

Blessed is he that attentively considers and weighs all the Words of the Lord Jesus Christ: For in them is Life indeed; and they are the Words of Eternal Truth. Let him that hath an Ear hear, what the Truth it self speaketh.

Whatever any Man buildeth upon the Oracles of Christ, is built upon a Rock: But what is built on Human Sayings, is founded on the Quick-sands. The Righteousness of Christ is far different from that of all the Philosophers: As thou art a Disciple therefore of Christ, and not of Men, let his Righteousness, rather than theirs, be thine: Follow thou him, not them; and make his Virtue, which is perfect, thy Standard.

It is indeed a great matter to value Virtue for its own Excellence and Beauty: But if thou dost so, what dost thou more than what even the very Heathens by their Natural Light have done? As for thee now, who professest thy self a Follower of Him, and of his Law, thou must learn to value Virtue, for the Beauty, Worth and Excellency which it has in Christ Jesus, in whom thou shalt find it. For *in its Self*, Virtue is a thing *Natural*; but as consider'd *in Him*, it is *Divine*. Love it therefore, because thou admirest and adorest it, in Christ: Practise it, because it was Christ's Practice; and that, in so doing, thou copiest after him, who is the most perfect Original, the most beautiful Exemplar, and most safe Foundation.

C H A P. XXVI.

The True and Inward Comfort.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Hidden Manna, and will give him a new Name, Rev. ii.

THE *Hidden Manna* is the Consolation of the Holy Ghost, from the Hope of Pardon, and from the Contrition of Sins, with a good Purpose and firm Intention of leading a new Life, and persisting and improving therein to God's Glory. God is true, and all his Works are true; they are not to be shaken. Heaven and Earth may pass away: But these shall remain; they shall remain for ever and ever. Verily, verily, here is the Consolation of the Saints.

A true and faithful Friend speaketh no Lye, nor dealeth fraudulently with his Neighbour. If any one deceive another, the Truth is not in him. The faithful Friend is a Comforter in God's Hand; and if he knoweth to do good, and to give good Gifts, where he loveth; how much more doth our heavenly Friend?

He that is Proud of any Good, is neither Grateful nor Faithful to God. Be not exalted with Pride, lest thou lose that Gift which thou hast received from above, without any Merit of thine own.

Have a care of thy good Name; but do not feign thy self Better, nor believe thy self Holier than others.

A good Life makes a good Name: And he that governs himself ill, need not complain if he lose his good Name.

He obtains again the *New Name*, who puts off the corrupt Habits of the *Old Nature*, and forsakes all Evil Manners. This is the Way only for thee to arrive at interior Consolation, and to purchase the Precious Jewel of the Peace of God in the Soul.

He

He truly begins to live, as a Child that is new born, who firmly propounds henceforward to walk in the Spirit, and shuns and despises all things hurtful.

Better is a good Fame from Holiness of Life, than the sweet Odour of most precious Ointment, or than much Riches. And the Internal Peace, which is sown in the Silence and Solitude of the Heart, that is drawn from the World, and set wholly upon God, is indeed infinitely beyond all that can be hoped for on Earth.

C H A P. XXVII.

The Recollection of the Heart in Silence.

**My Secret is with me, Isa. xxiv. Vulg. Lat.*

WHen thou shalt find thy self distracted, or drawn outwards, by reason of long Discourses and Conferences, recollect thy self again in long Silence, abiding within alone in thy Closet, and groaning in the *Secret* Ground of thy Heart for what thou hast committed.

The Distraction of Heart soon comes from things seen and heard: But frequent Prayer, and internal Compunction, expel thence all noxious Imaginations and superfluous Cares.

Now, tho' the outward Solitude may here much assist for the obtaining the desired Peace of Mind; yet know, that it is possible for thee to be alone and silent, even in the heart of a Crowd, and in the greatest Multitude, by keeping a strong Guard at the Door of thy Heart and Mouth.

** Secretum meum mihi.*

This

This interior Solitude of the Soul, consists in a Disengagement from all Creatures, and a Nakedness of all the Affections, Desires and Thoughts of this World. O how happy is that Soul, that is once come to be truly Solitary!

True and undefiled Religion consists not in a noisy Appearance, but in a silent sweet Composedness of Mind, influencing and gently directing the whole Course of Life, according to the Pattern given by our Lord in the Mount.

Learn then to retire in the true Poverty and Nakedness of Spirit, turning the Eyes of thy Mind, with all the Intellectual Powers and Faculties, inwards; and let thy Soul, taken off from the World, sweetly repose in the Arms of her Jesus. The more, O Soul, thou shalt disrobe thy self, the more shalt thou be clothed with Christ; and the more empty thou art of thy own Will, the more shalt thou be filled with his Spirit, and established in his Will. O seek him only, and let him have all thy Sighs.

Go on without stop: Halt not in any Creature whatever; but press forward towards this Internal Retirement, wherein God is found, and his marvellous Conversation is enjoyed. Recollect, compose, and dress thy Mind in the Divine Presence; and forget every Care and Thought that would drag thee down, or divert thee from so high a Blessing, as the intimate and sweet Union of Love, which is felt in this holy Solitude.

He that seeks not after Profit, nor covets any thing on the Earth, and retires from all Tumult and Hurry, may soon learn to *flee* freely to Christ in the Heavens; according to what St. *Monica*, the most devout Mother of St. *Austin*, says in a certain place, *Christians, let us fly to Heaven.*

C H A P. XXVIII.

Against Vain Glory.

Every Man living is altogether Vanity, Psal. xxxix.

BUT hadst thou even Wings to fly up, and mount Heaven; yet take very great heed to thy self. For thou art not out of Danger be thou never so highly Favoured. In thy most holy Solitude the Tempter will strive to break in, and to lift thee up.

Shun being extoll'd for any Good before Men; for thou hast many Defaults within which God discerneth but which thou thy self seeest not, neither considerest as thou oughtest.

There is no greater hindrance than this, of true Internal Peace: And for Man who is Vanity, to glory in himself, is the most infamous and scandalous of Lies.

He who seeketh after the Praise of Men for some singular Deed, doth often, by the wise Permission of God, incur Confusion before a Multitude openly.

A good Complexion shews best without Painting: And where Virtue is, it will appear to its own Praise; although all the Tongues and Pens of Men be silent. And those only are truly Praise-worthy, whose own proper Virtues speak their own Praises: Whose Praise is not of Men, but of God.

Vain Glory, and the Love of one's own Praise, deceive very many; depriving them of the Eternal good Things: As appears in the *Foolish Virgins*, who vainly imagined themselves to be as the *Wise*.

What is more foolish than to chuse the vain and shadowy things, and to reject the true and real? What more perverse than to neglect God, and to attend

tend to Man? What more extravagant than to value the World, and undervalue Heaven?

Let nothing be great unto thee, nothing high, nothing grateful, nothing acceptable, but only God himself purely : Or that which is for God, and in perfect Subordination to him.

The Heart of the Rich Man is in the Earth : The Heart of the Poor Good Man is in Heaven. The Heart of the humble One is *under* God : The Heart of the Proud is *against* God.

C H A P. XXIX.

Cleanse of Heart.

Blessed are the Pure in Heart, Matt. v.

Cleanse thy Heart from Vices, following the Divine Grace, that so thou may'st be truly good : For why, O Wretch, seekest thou to be commended for those good things which thou hast not? Thou art truly despicable in many things, so as thou may'st deservedly blush at thy self for these, however thou carest not to hear thereof from others.

Who are those that love Vanity? Such as affect the Praise of Man, rather than of God. The more silently and secretly thou dost any good Action, it is always the best.

The humble Person, and he that is vile in his own Eyes, stands in the Truth : And never lifts up himself for any Good that is in him ; but continually humbles his Soul, and confesses himself a Sinner, and laments for the same bitterly.

Look

Look into thy self thoroughly well; search what lies most deep hidden within thee: And do not slightly believe a strange Tongue, or windy Fame. I have seen one praising his Neighbour to the Face, and behind his Back most vilely detracting from him: And on the other side, I have considered a Person seriously reproving his Friend in Charity, and excusing him publickly, when he knew nothing of it.

When Truth and Charity meet each other, then manage they together the things of Peace and Salvation in excellent Harmony.

Wash thy hands from the perverse Work; and refrain thy Lips from idle Speech, thine Eyes from hurtful Sight, and thine Heart from evil thinking, and thou shalt be clean before God.

C H A P. XXX.

The True Peace.

Blessed are the Peace-Makers, Matth. v.

GOD loveth a pure Heart, Christ dwelleth in Peace; and the Holy Spirit resteth upon the humble and the meek. As often as thou hast an Opportunity presented, let it be thy earnest study to prevent Misunderstandings, and to compose Differences among the Brethren.

In the Crowd Jesus is lost; in Laughter he is offended; in Anger he is driven away; in a Lie he is spit upon; in Detraction he is stripped; in Guile he is smitten; in Hatred he is crucified: Whatever Evil is thrown upon thy Christian Neighbour, Jesus complains thereof as done to himself.

Take heed of offending God : Take heed also of offending thy Neighbour, made after the Image of God.

Recal the Wanderer, instruct the Ignorant, set a good Example, remove every Block of Offence, follow JESUS bearing his Reproach, return Good for Evil, and thou shalt receive for every little that is here endured an eternal Reward, and Joy with the holy Angels in the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the *Way of Peace* ; the Blessed of the Lord shall walk in it, and their Memorial shall be precious.

C H A P. XXXI.

The Earnest Desire of the Novice to press forward in this way : With his Petition for Divine Grace.

Disciple.

I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou hast set my Heart at Liberty, Psal. cxix.

THIS is what my Heart indeed burns with a Desire to attain ; but it seems to me more than possible for a poor Creature, in such Circumstances as I am at present in. All my Hope and Comfort is, to have recourse, according as you have directed me, to my most gracious Lord ; and to invoke him from the bottom of my Heart, that he would lead me in this way of Humility and Peace ; in the sure Confidence that I may depend at all times on his Aid and Support, which is sufficient for me.

O Heavenly and Divine Grace ! without which all the good Works that can be done, and all the Gifts of

Nature, are not worthy of any Esteem or Consideration. What am I without thee, but a dry piece of Wood, good for nought but the Fire?

Strengthen me, O Lord my God, who art the Object of my Sighs and Desires, in comparison of whom the whole World is most burthenfome and nauseous. Give me Grace to follow the Example of thy Life, to despise always this World as thou hast done, and to be content to have that also despise me, as it despised thee.

Give me thy Grace, that I may know and consider my self; that (in despite of the World) I may seek thy Kingdom with the Righteousness thereof; that I may diligently learn the Practice of a true Disciple of thine in all Estates and Conditions; that I may treasure up the Observations and Maxims which I have heard from thy Servant whom thou sentest me, and bring forth the Fruit thereof in all good Living to thy Glory only; and that duly weighing the State of Human Misery and Mortality, both in my self and others, and the Changes and Chances of this present dying Life, I may wisely set my House in Order, and abide in a continual Preparation for my Passage hence, whensoever thou, O Lord my Saviour, shalt please to call and deliver me out of my Captivity.

I offer my self now unto thee, O my God, in the Simplicity of my Heart: I offer my self unto thy Majesty in a Sacrifice of Praise for evermore, being made willing to serve and obey thee eternally. I have an extreme Grief for all my Faults, I make a firm Resolution through thy Grace not to commit them again, and I am ready henceforward to mind my own Business, and to make all possible Reparation and Satisfaction for the evil Influence and Example by me at any time given. Hear my Supplication, O God of my Salvation, and be favourable unto thy Servant for thy Mercies Sake.

C H A P. XXXII.

Of the Practice of a Pious Man.

Master.

Seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness.

1. **T**HE Life of a Disciple of Christ ought to shine with all the Vertues, that he may be inwardly such, as outwardly he seemeth unto Men. Nay, he ought to be much more within than is perceived without; for God beholdeth the Heart, whom we ought most highly to reverence, wheresoever we are, and walk in Purity like Angels in his Sight. For which it is fit to renew daily our Purposes, and stir up our selves to Fervour, as though this were the first Day of our Conversion, and to say, “ Help me, O
“ my God, in this my good purpose, and in thy ho-
“ ly Service: And grant that I may now this Day
“ begin perfectly, for that which I have done hither-
“ to is nothing.

2. Now according to our Purpose shall be the Success of our Profit: but much Diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth, often faileth; what shall he do that seldom purposeth any thing, or but with little Certainty? It may fall out sundry ways, that we may leave off good Purposes; but if for light Occasions we omit our spiritual Exercises, this seldom is without some Loss, and that very considerable too.

3. It is the Custom of a great many, before they be sufficiently grounded and settled, that when they hear any one but greatly commended for their Virtues and Religious Exercises, they are so inflam'd with the great Character that is given, and with the high Praises

ses which they hear, as they instantly desire to follow and take upon them the same State and Vocation with them, which is a very great Mistake. For by such a Changeableness and Diversity of Purposes, they receive Damages, and not Profit. Since he that studies or follows after many things, will hardly obtain one of them.

4. Therefore it is meet and expedient for every one, according to the Purpose which he has made, and according to the Grace which he has received, to hasten with all Industry and Diligence to arrive at the Perfection of that Work which he shall have undertaken : and though thou mayst be delighted to hear others prais'd for their good Exercises, and mayst have in Admiration their Virtues ; yet depart not therefore from thy Profession, which thou shalt have once made choice of. For by several Paths we may tend to the same End : and by different Courses we may come to Christ, and imitate his Life. For this Reason thou must, with an irrevocable Intention, continue and pursue the way thou hast taken ; endeavouring by all means to be as perfect as it is possible therein. Use frequent Recollection for this Purpose, that so thy Heart may be fully established and fixed.

5. If thou canst not always recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes ; at least once every Day. In the Morning make thy good Purposes or Resolutions : In the Evening examine thy self according to these what thou hast been that Day in Thought, Word or Deed ; in these oftentimes perhaps thou shalt have both offended God and thy Neighbour, and wounded thine own Soul.

6. Arm thy self in the Day-time with Courage and Valour against the Attempts of thine Enemy. Never be altogether idle, but ever effecting some of thy good Purposes, which thou madest in the Morning, when thou wast setting the Affairs of the Day in order

der ; even as if thou wert suddenly to depart this short Life, and to enter into Life Eternal : That so whether thou live or die, GOD may be always glorified in thee.

7. Consider this Life as a continual Warfare : And flee not shamefully from thy Colours, neither shrink from bearing the Burthen and Heat of the Day ; but at all times be thou prepared for the Spiritual Combat, and pray frequently in thy Heart, that thou mayst be one of the chosen Servants of *Abraham's* Household, by Faith making Kings with their Armies to flee apace, and by Prayer scattering the confederated Princes of Darkness, together with all their Hosts ; make War against them all with the help of thy God, wrestling in Supplication, subduing the Flesh to the Spirits, and patiently bearing all Crosses, as all the Saints, and chiefly the *Martyrs* of Christ have done. Who, fighting most courageously, have overcome their Adversaries : And by a sweet and gentle way of suffering, have obtain'd the noblest Victories, and purchas'd to themselves Laurels that never fade. These have not had Respect to their Friends and Relations after the Flesh, when made Instruments in the hands of the Tempter, neither to Temporal Riches and Honours ; but to the Eternal Rewards, to the Heavenly Treasures, to the Triumphant Crowns above, to the ever-flourishing Palms, and to the uncorruptible and unperishable Glories of the Inhabitants in Light. For by short transitory Torments, and the Reprouches but of a Moment, they have been fitted by Christ to pass without Delay into the everlasting Joys. And now do their Souls rejoice in the Heavenly Mansions, who have followed the Steps of Christ in this Life, and bare his Cross after him in much Ignominy and grievous Pain. Do thou so in like manner ; so shalt thou not fail with them likewise to be crown'd.

8. Consider also, and ponder in thy Mind, how the holy *Confessors*, in their several Generations, have fought, by living soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present World; by fasting, by watching, by praying, by meditating, by studying, by labouring, by sighing, by lamenting, by supplicating for the Sins of themselves and others; by bearing of Gainsayings, Slanders, Railings, Murmurings, evil Whisperings, Derisions, Menaces, Losses, and all manner of Injuries; and by persevering through all Trials, in true Faith, firm Hope, and perfect Charity, even to the Death. Put on therefore the whole Armour of Christ: And be girt about especially with the Sword of the Spirit, and of the Word; whereby thou may'st be able to defeat all those evil Legions that set themselves in Battel-Array against thee.

9. Thou must above all things have a low and profound Knowledge of thy Vileness, Rottenness and Misery: And though every thing should fall out contrary to thee, must neither be disquieted, nor afflicted at it; but adore herein the wise and righteous Dispensation of God, and as one swallowed up in the Depth of thine own Nothing, must wait for the Communication of the Divine Light, Peace and Love.

As for thy *exteriour* Conversation, thou must be intent always upon the End, that it be justifiable and praise-worthy: And thou must learn to break thine own Will in many things, yea, even in *some good* things too, if thou wilt have Peace and Concord with others.

10. If thou wilt persevere in Grace as thou oughtest, esteem thy self, O Beloved in Christ, as a banished Man and a Pilgrim upon Earth. Thou must not think of taking up thy Habitation in an Inn: Neither must thou let any thing stop thee by the way. Thou must well be contented for the Love of

Christ to be esteemed as a Fool in this World, if thou desire to lead a Religious Life. Since God incarnate was call'd Fool, and said to have a Devil, what a Folly is it for thee, to desire and expect better Treatment from the World, than he had ! If thou indeed tread in his Steps, and imitate his Virtues ; it will seem but a light thing, that it is with the Servant, even as it is with the Master.

He that seeketh any thing but God, and the Welfare of his Soul, shall find nothing but Tribulation and Sorrow : And he that looketh to any but Christ, in his Spiritual Travels, shall assuredly stray from the Truth.

Thou camest to serve, not to be served ; thou wast called to suffer and labour, not to be idle, or spend thy time in Vanity : For in the School of Christ Men are tried as Gold in the Furnace. If thou follow him not through the Fire, verily thou art by no means worthy of him.

No Man can stand unless he be low in his own Eyes, and humble himself with his whole Heart for the Love of God. Now the humble in Heart is never concern'd in that he cannot do great things ; for he always stands in his own Nothing and Misery ; and here he is safe.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Consideration of humane Misery.

Man is born to Trouble as the Sparks fly upward.

1. **M**iserable thou art where-soever thou turnest, if thou turn not thy self to God. Why art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldst and desirest? Who is there that hath all things as he will? Neither I, nor thou, nor any Man upon the Face of the Earth. Who thinkest thou then is in the best Case? Truly he that willingly suffers any thing for God.

2. The Felicity of Man consisteth not in having abundance of Temporal Riches: A mean sufficeth. It is truly Misery enough to live upon Earth: No Man can be said to be really happy on this side the River of Death. How much the more a Man advanceth to be Spiritual, so much the more distastful is this present Life unto him; for he better perceiveth, and seeth more clearly the Defects of all things humane, and the Corruptions of the very best laid Designs.

3. The inward Man is much oppress'd with corporal Necessities, whilst he is in this World; but woe unto them that know not their Misery, and much more to them that love this miserable Life: For some there be alas! so dotingly affected to it, that although they scarce get Bread to eat, yet if they might live here but always, they would care little for the Kingdom of Heaven and the Riches of it.

4. The Saints of God, and the devout Servants of Christ, respected little what pleas'd their natural Inclinations, or what flourish'd in this Life; but with their whole Hopes and Intentions they sought after
the

the Riches of Heaven. Their whole Desire was carried up to those everlasting Treasures, which are invisible: Lest they might have been drawn down to base Affections, by the Love of visible things.

5. Lay up there thy Treasure in like manner: And for this lose not any Hour to profit in Spiritual Matters. There is yet time; the Hour is not yet past. Why wilt thou defer thy good Purpose? Rise up this very Instant, and begin and say, "Now is the time to work, the time to fight; now, even now is a fit time to amend my self. Why delayest thou, O my Soul, the Execution? In the Name of the Lord Jesus up and be doing.

6. We would gladly enjoy Quietness; but having by Sin lost our Innocency, we have by it too lost our Happiness. And therefore it behoveth us to have Patience, and to expect till this Iniquity have an end, and that which is mortal be swallowed up of Immortality.

Disciple. Oh how great is the Frailty of Man, that is always inclined to Evil! to Day I confess my Sins, and to Morrow I commit the same which I did confess. Now I purpose to take heed, and within an Hour I do as if I had made no purpose at all. I ought therefore with great Reason to humble my self, and never to think of my self with any Esteem, being so weak as I am; that is, subject to every Change, and tossed about with every Puff of Wind hither and thither. Full soon (God knows) is that lost by Negligence, which with much Labour was hardly gotten by Grace. What will become of me in the end, who do so early begin to wax cold? Woe be unto me, if I will now give up my self to Ease, as if all were already in Peace and Security. O that I could but hold out till the End of the Day, and not faint before my Warfare shall be accomplished.

C H A P. XXXIV.

Of the Preparation for Death.

Master.

Ye know not what Hour your Lord doth come.

THE Hour of Death will quickly overtake thee, and therefore look how thou livest: To Day a Man is living, to Morrow he doth not appear; and being once out of sight, he is also quickly out of mind. O Dulness and Hardness of Man's Heart, who thinketh only on that he seeth, and foreseeth not that which is to come! If thou hadst a good Conscience, thou would'st not much fear Death. It is better verily to avoid Sin, than to flee from Death. If thou be not prepared to Day, how wilt thou be prepared to Morrow? To Morrow is uncertain; and whether thou shalt see it or no, thou knowest not.

Blessed is he that hath always before his Eyes the Hour of his Death, and disposeth himself daily thereunto. When it is Morning, think that perhaps thou shalt not live till Night; and when Evening comes, do not dare to promise thy self the next Morning. Be always ready, and so order thy Life, that Death may never take thee unprepared. When that last Hour shall come, thou wilt begin to think far otherwise of thy self; and wilt much lament, that thou hast been so slack and so negligent.

Oh how wise and happy is he, that now laboureth to be such in his Life, as he wisheth to be found at the Hour of Death! For the Contempt of the World, the fervent Desire to profit in the Ways of Godliness, the forsaking of our selves, and adhering unto Christ, will

will give great Confidence of an happy End. Thou may'st do much good whilst thou art well and in Health ; but when thou art sick, what thou wilt be able to do, I know not ; for few do grow better, and amend themselves with Sicknefs.

Trust not upon thy Friends or Relations, what they shall do for thee at or after thy Departure ; neither do thou put off to a future time the Care of thy Soul's Health ; for thou shalt sooner be forgotten than thou dost imagine. It is better now to provide in time, and do some good before thou goest, than to trust in the help of others when thou art gone. If thou hast no Care of thy self now when thou hast time, who thinkest thou (supposing this would avail thee ought) will be careful for thee hereafter ? Time, which now thou hast by the Fore-lock, is very precious. Now are the Days of Health, now is the acceptable Time : But, alas ! that thou spendest so little of it to thy Profit, in which thou mightest gain eternal Life.

Oh my dear Friend ! from how great Danger may'st thou be deliver'd ? From how great Fear may'st thou be freed, if thou dost now live careful of thy Death ? Live then in such sort, as at the Hour of Death thou may'st rather rejoice than fear. Learn now to die to the World, that thou may'st then begin to live with Christ. Learn now to condemn all Earthly Things, that thou may'st then freely go to Christ, not being held back by any Encumbrance.

Why dost thou think thou shalt live long, being not certain of as much as one Day ? How many alas ! have been deceived, and taken out of this World on a sudden, when they least expected it ? How often hast thou heard, that such an one was murther'd, another was drown'd, another died at his Meat, another when he was at Play ; one came to his End by Fire, a second by Sword, a third by the Hands of Thieves ? So as
Death

Death is the end of all, and the Life of Man passeth away like a Shadow.

Do now, yea, do now what thou canst; for thou knowest not how soon thou shalt die, nor what shall befall thee after thy Death: Now, whilst thou hast time, heap together the eternal Riches; now think on the Health and Salvation of thy Soul. Esteem thyself as a Pilgrim upon Earth, and as one to whom the Affairs of this World do no ways appertain. Keep thy Heart free, and lifted up to God; for thou hast here no continuing City. Settle here thy Conversation in Heaven. Send thither thy Prayers daily with Sighs and Tears, that thy Soul may pass with much Satisfaction from Death to Life, from Earth to Heaven, where there is Fulness of Joy and Pleasure for evermore. To which may Christ of his infinite Mercy bring us all.

Disciple. Amen.

C H A P. XXXV.

Heaven is the Native Home of the Saints.

The Beloved and the Disciple.

Christ. *In my Father's House are many Mansions.*

Disciple. **I** Desire, Lord, to see that Place where thou hast prepared me an everlasting Mansion. For I am here, alas! but a Stranger and a Pilgrim; and the Days of my Pilgrimage are few and evil. I long to see my Heavenly Country, accounting myself as banished in this World. I perceive hourly, that this Life passeth away as a vain Shadow: My Days are numbred, and my Substance is as nothing before
1
thee

thee. And what now is my Hope? Is it not thou, Lord? Yea, thou art my Hope; and thou, I trust, shalt make me to drink out of the Torrent of Pleasure, which is at thy Right Hand: For my Soul is a thirst after thee in this dry barren Wilderness; and being here wearied and fainting, pants after the Waters of Eternal Life, and those Streams that flow continually from under thy Throne, O God.

2. How long must I continue here an Exile and a Prisoner? How long, Lord, must my Passage be through this Valley of Sorrow and Sin? O let thy Right Hand lead me forth, and let thy good Spirit guide me safe to the Land of the Living, where I long to be, and to appear before thee in the Beauty of thy Holiness. O when shall there be an end of all these Evils, which I am here oppress'd with? When shall I be discharged of the miserable Captivity, under which I groan, as fast bound under the Influences of this wicked World? When shall I be without all hindrance in the true Liberty, without any Impediment of Mind or Body? When shall I stand in thy Presence, sweet *Jesu*, and contemplate the Glory of thy Kingdom?

3. Alas! I am an Exile and a Cast-out in an Enemy's Country, where there are daily Wars, and very great and deplorable Mischiefs: O do thou comfort my Banishment, mitigate my Grief, and satisfy my eager Longing; for all my Desire is towards thee: Whence, whatever this World doth or can present to ease me, is to me altogether burthensome. But lift up thy self, O my Soul, and aspire towards thine Inheritance in God. For the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Portion of thy Heritage, and thy exceeding great Reward; and because he hath loved thee, will he fill thee with the Joy of his Countenance for evermore. *Amen.*

A
P R A Y E R

By the DISCIPLE.

I. **I** Beseech thee, O Lord, most Holy Father, who hast
* **I** made all things in Number, Weight and Measure ;
who expectest that a due Service be paid thee by every
Rational and Intelligent Creature ; and chiefly in thy
Servants, lovest and requirest to have a free Service ;
Guide my free Acts in thy good Will, lead me gently,
according to thy most righteous Pleasure, sit thou at the
Helm in me, and turn it as thou pleasest ; bring under
the rebellious Motions of my Flesh in all things, to the
Government of thy Divine Disposal ; and grant me Power
entirely to break and subdue mine own Will.

II. So order thou, good Lord, all my Affections, as I
may reject those that are Evil at the very first, and va-
liantly and strenuously hold fast those that are Good ; may
love those that are pure ; and may learn to contemplate
thee, my God, without any Bodily Image. So temper
therefore my Natural Forces and Operations, which of
themselves tend outwards, as I may not be immers'd wholly
in Objects of the Earth, or stick in them ; but that I
may have Strength sufficient from thee to turn aside from
them, and to turn unto thee. So preserve me in the Desire
of the Eternal Things, in the Love of the Holy Virtues
and Christian Graces, and in some degree, even of En-
joyment of the Heavenly Realities ; as thou, O Lord God,
may'st thereby have greater Honour, and I a better Pro-
gress in the Work of the inward Regeneration.

* De Discipl. Clauslr. c. 10.

III. Suffer me not to be puffed up with any Self-applause, because of thy most gracious and condescending Visitation; neither let the Plague of Vain-Glory ever in the least infect or disturb me: Permit me not to be deceived by Satan's Delusion, nor to be taken with false Sweetnesses and Sensations, nor for the Sake of private Devotion, to neglect the publick; nor with immoderate Exercise and Mortification, too much to break Nature: But grant unto me, that, by the Assistance of thy Wisdom, I may do all things with Discretion; never pretending to, or attempting any thing, without mature Deliberation and Counsel first had; and that with Fear and Reverence of thy Majesty, I may walk in thy Sight holily and freely, wisely and prudently, without all Passion and Affection for corruptible Things; with an Eye still fixed on my Heavenly Country, and steadfastly looking unto thy Son, my beloved Lord, as the sole Author and Finisher of my Faith and Salvation.

IV. Grant me to possess an humble and a quiet Spirit; never to be immoderate or extravagant in any thing, nor to cleave to any Creature by a fond and vicious Love; but to preserve continually my Heart pure and quiet for thee alone; that being ever lifted up in Mind to Heaven, and secretly bent upon thee, my God, I may be captivated by nothing visible; but may persevere to the end, a true Despisers of the World, and Follower of Thee.

V. Grant me to perform Outward Things in Time and Season, according as the several Circumstances require, after the best and fittest manner; and specially so as they may be no kind of detriment or hindrance to the Inward; that is, my Spiritual and Internal Exercises: But that, on the contrary, every Work and Labour for thee undertaken, may afford me both Furtherance and Guidanee to wait more freely upon thee; and may enlarge my Soul to a greater Capacity and Willingness in serving thy Majesty, and honouring thy Name, as with the Liberty of Saints and Angels.

VI. *Vouchsafe also, that all what I do Outwardly, or what I understand Inwardly, I may be enabled by thy gracious Aid to perform, simply and purely for the greater Honour of thy Name, and Love of thy most Blessed Will, full of Goodness and Tendernefs; and readily and cheerfully to resign my self to thee in every desirable Thing, as also in whatsoever may be contrary to Nature; patiently also to bear the Load and Burthen of this present Life, so far as thou shalt command, and as the Term of my Lot shall reach, and I be called hence: And, finally, to commend in Faith to thee, my Creator and my Redeemer, both my Body and my Soul. Be mindful of me, O God, in the last Hour, the Hour of utmost Extremity; and deal with thy Servant mercifully: For * Not in my own Merits, but in thy Mercy and Pity, do I trust, O Lord, my God, and my Redeemer.*

* *Non in meritis meis, sed in tua miseratione & pietate confido.*

OF THE
IMITATION
OF
Jesus Christ.

The Third Book.
Of Spiritual Exercises.

C H A P. I.

The great Benefit of such Exercises; with some Preparatory Rules and Reflexions.

Be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, saith the Blessed Apostle Paul, Ephes. iv.

IT is the Custom of Devout Christians to have certain *Exercises*, whereby they may be excited and quickened to a Spiritual Growth, and the Love of Piety. Such delight not to be in the Crowd and Hurry of the World, but love rather Privacy and Retirement: They carefully examine and discuss their own Life; and if they shall have offended in any thing, presently they endeavour, through the help



*Ab Exterioribus, pervenitur ad Interiora: ab Inferioribus ad Superiora:
a Corporalibus ad Spiritualia.*

M. J. Gucht Sculp.



help of Christ, to purge the same with due Contrition. They watch over their Thoughts; they take a strict notice with what Affections they are principally mov'd; and by frequent Prayer, and Meditation of the Holy Scripture, they fortifie themselves, and say, *Remove from me the Way of Unrighteousness; and concerning thy Law, have thou mercy upon me.* Psal. cxix. For it can be no otherwise, but that the Heart which insists not on Devout and Internal Exercises should be carried away into Vanity and Multiplicity of Objects, and so be defiled easily with the Filth of Sin, and the wretched Mud of this World.

The first of all these Exercises, and the most useful in order to the Purification of the Mind, is to know and confess the vitious Passions of the Soul; and to seek after the proper Remedies for them from God, through Christ, with Sighs and Tears. For certainly, if the Poor, the Sick, the Wounded, do by their piteous Cries extort Compassion from such as pass by, and frequently move them to administer some convenient help; much more shall the merciful and Gracious Lord not despise the Prayer of the contrite Spirit, sighing after Eternal Salvation.

Thou must then have certain Exercises suited to thy Conversation, and manner of Life; which may serve to instruct, renew and enflame thee, when thou art alone. Nor must these Private Exercises exclude or interfere with such as are more publick, or of common Obligation: But rather ought they to render thee more Prompt and Expeditious to these; so as thou may'st not incur any loss or detriment of Internal Peace. Nevertheless if it should so happen, that by some necessary occasion intervening, thou shalt be hindered from making an end of these thy Exercises, when thou hast begun them; then endeavour as soon as is possible, to return to thy self, and recollect thy Mind in secret.

Moreover, it is advisable, that thou keep a little Book, in which may be register'd, for thy own private Use, whatever is worthy to be remark'd concerning thine *outward* and *inward* Life. And thou must frequently also look into this Book, and specially at certain stated Seasons of Self-Examination : That so thou may'st have a better and more distinct Knowledge either of thy Advancement and Proficiency in the Spiritual Way, or else of thy going backwards and Deficiency in it.

According to the Grace which is given thee, be sure to form in thy Mind, and set before thy self fixedly, a Rule and Standard to go by. Let this Rule never depart from thee; but take good heed to it continually; square all thy Actions by it, and also thy very Words and Thoughts; look unto Christ herein, without Intermission, as the sole Author and Finisher of thy Faith, and of every good Word and Work; see also that this thy Rule be comprehensive enough, and that it contain a Standard both of our Holy Religion *in general*, and the Imitation of our Lord, and likewise of thy *particular Institution* of Life, and the more near and immediate Concerns in thy ordinary Conversation.

None is better instructed to every good thing, than he who is inwardly led of the Holy Ghost; whose Unction the meek and humble Man is fitted to receive.

It is the part of a wise Man to set his Life in order, and to prefix a due End to all his Acts of every kind. And it is needful farther, that he diligently inquire after the convenient Methods and Means, by which he may arrive at his principal Intent. One well order'd Action only of a wise Man is of far more Worth than the fullest Employment of a Fool: And a most simple Act, when rightly determin'd, is of vastly greater Value than a Multitude of others, even the most complicated

plicated, when loofely or irregularly perform'd. For he that *unseasonably* and *unconsiderately* acts, let him him do never so well, yet is not therefore in the right. Through Inconsideration and neglect of Opportunity we easily offend: And thus offending no wonder if we have Grief, and do smart for our Folly. The forward and rash Zealot will have always cause enough to repent: And never walks long without stumbling. But he whose manner it is providently and naturally to deliberate, before he set about any thing, will have Joy in the end of his Labours: And will be always successful, either according as he himself did propose, or else as God shall better dispose.

However be mindful still of thy own Frailty, let thy Success be never so good, or great: And make not any account of thine own Wisdom for it; but sink down in Poverty and Nakedness of Spirit, and ascribe not the least thing to thy self, but all to the Grace and Help of God. Who knocks down the Proud, and tramples on the Haughty; confounding the Wisdom of the Wise, and enervating the Strength of the Mighty. For God is the Hammer of the Proud: And the Self-conceited will he bruise in a Mortar.

C H A P. II.*The Morning Exercise, at first waking.*

EVery Morning it is fit thou propose to thy self, after what manner to spend with greatest Profit the ensuing Day. At the same time particularly examining thy own Conscience, thou art to take a more diligent Care about those Vices and Passions, which do most infest thee; or to which thou art either naturally or habitually prone: Lest thou be unawares surpriz'd; and do fall in the Temptation,

Daily Exercise fits the Soul for daily Increase of Grace : And Perseverance in Good leads on the Christian Combatant to a full Victory ; and advances us to the very pitch of Virtue.

Perhaps this very Day may be thy last ; perhaps too this may be even thy last Hour : The Morrow shall not find thee, it may be ; or possibly the very next Hour. Set then a Guard now upon thy self ; keep sedulously and firmly thy Purpose ; neglect not thy Time, but be sure to make the best of that which is in thy hand ; when the Hour is once pass'd, it returns not again.

Fight the good Fight. Pray for Grace : And Victory shall be given thee from Heaven, even an holy Victory. Study to overcome thy self in lesser Matters, that so Sloth prevail not over thee, and thou fall in o that which is worse. Let the Law of God be familiar in thine Heart : And let not giving of Thanks, and the Voice of Praise, ever grow cold in thy Mouth.

All Time that is not spent with God bewail thou as lost. Take heed of engaging thy self in slight or trivial Discourses, and prevent as much as possible all unnecessary Visits. For this end in thy Closet it may not be unfit to have always some *Memento* set as in thine Eye : Which may both premonish thee at thy going out, and reprove thee when thou tarriest long abroad ; as for instance, some most remarkable and powerful Sentence, with which thou art chiefly affected, written in Capitals, such as, I COME QUICKLY ; or this, WATCH, or the like. In being among many Men, and of Variety of Humours, is thy Danger. Watch thy Steps therefore, and watch thy Company.

With the Beginning of the Day bless the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who has granted to thee farther Time and Space for Amendment, and leading a
Life,

Life according to Christ; and has made his Sun to rise upon thee for various and manifold Uses. Make haste to bow thy Soul before His Majesty, and with all Care and Exactness to dress thine Inward Man. And be sure that no Worldly or Indifferent Affairs take up thy Mind at the beginning of the Day: Neither defer thou, or curtail, thy Religious Exercises, upon any Unwillingness, or slight Pretence. Thou must be a good Husband of thy Hours; and if thou art wise, thou wilt never squander away Time in dressing thy Body. And for as much as thy Calling, or Employment, may consist of several Branches, or particular Occupations and Services; look that one do not encroach upon the other: But see to prefer the most important for the time present, and for the principal End. Now what is this End? It is no other undoubtedly than CHRIST. Let Him be thy Life, and the sole Standard of thy Words and Actions. *For thee to live* let it be *Christ*: And let all thy Works be *Christ*; that is, make Him the End of them all, as well as the Beginning; and direct them always to his Praise and Glory. Let Him be thy whole Hope, and the everlasting Reward which thou expectest: And neither seek for, nor affect the Favour of Men.

If thou carest not to be deceived, be not tickled with foolish Praises. God knows thine Heart, and discerns how impure and vain it is. Regard not him that flattereth; but listen thou rather to him that reproveth, who while he rebuketh thee for thy Faults, doth thee the best Service; though he be not a pleasant, yet he is a good Counsellor for thee. Have always in a readiness the holy Exercise of Prayer, as an invincible shield against every thing that would cross thee, and against all the Attacks of the Tempter.

C H A P. III.

*Of the Elevation and Direction of the Heart
to GOD.*

BEfore any External Work first lift up thy Heart to GOD. Whatever Good thou shalt do, or speak, make but light account of it: Thou shalt not for it have any better Opinion at all of thy self; but shalt of thy self be judged to be a mere unprofitable Servant indeed. For even but a slight rising up of the Heart is offensive to the Eyes of the Divine Majesty. Would to God that thou couldst but spend one Day at least, or one Hour, or even but one half Hour, *entirely*, as thou oughtest, with thy Lord and Saviour. Alas! there where thou shouldst be, and where thou seemest also to be, more devout than ordinary, there is found in thee far too little of Attention or Purity. And how thinkest thou that thy Prayers should ascend, or that thy Words should be acceptable; while thou art so unstedfast, and so unpurified.

Thy Work being ended, or the solemn Office of Prayer performed, render Thanks for what is well done, and ask pardon with a lowly and contrite Heart for the Negligences that may have crept in, and surprized thee. Humble Deprecation, and begging of Pardon, before God, and in the Presence of his holy Angels, is that which greatly purgeth away Transgression: And is, through the Blood of Christ, the Ablution of the Conscience when soiled.

At your solemn Offices of Prayer, and in all your Exercises of Piety, it may be very profitable to make use of the Lord's Prayer as a means of Recollection with God in Spirit. Nothing can be more proper
than

than this to excite and quicken the Heart ; to inflame it, and gather it inwards ; to unite it against Distractions, and fortifie it against Temptations : Nothing, in a word, more acceptable to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Author, who will not send any away empty, any that comes to him through Faith in his Son's own very Words. This is *Gathering* with Christ in a true Sense, to gather up thy Soul into his Spirit, according as he himself hath taught thee ; and thus to come unto his Father and thy Father, as in *His Name* : And whosoever *Gathereth* after this manner can never for certain be a Loser. But *He that gathereth not with me*, saith our Blessed Jesus, *scattereth abroad* : And he Matt. xii. *that is not with me*, by being gather'd inwards *is against me*, by being drawn outwards ; and by wandring forth into the World, and its deluding Objects, the poor Soul thus quickly loseth her self, because she is no more *with*, but *without*, yea *against* Christ. Ah poor Soul ! Whither fleest thou ? Whither gaddest thou ? What is it, thinkest thou, that the Creatures can give thee ? Where is thy Jesus ? in the Crowd ? Ah ! never, never shalt thou find him in the Crowd of thy Thoughts. Retire, recollect, *Gather* thy self *with Him* : So will he be found of thee ; he will be found in his *Father's House*, and about his *Father's Business* ; he will be found in thy Heart, where he loveth to be, and to make it an House of Prayer, when thou shalt have *shut the Door* of it, diligently keeping all the Avenues that the Enemy steal not in.

Let the Sweet and Powerful Name of JESUS be frequently in thy Mouth, constantly in thy Heart. Thou shalt presently draw sweetness out of it, and Comfort to thy Soul, in every Distress and Difficulty : And shalt be effectually convinced of how great Value the true Internal Love of Jesus is, and receive a sensible Experience of the Benefits accruing to thee,
by

by thy invoking that holy Name in Faith rooted on Love. But he that is negligent herein shall soon find to his own Cost, that being not inwardly gather'd in the Unity of this Name, with all Saints, he is not one of their Number whose Work it is to *gather with Christ*. Wherefore let him recollect himself, and gather in apace his Mind to be with Christ; keeping a strict Watch for the future against all sensible Objects and Ideas, that he be no more so easily again surprized and captivated by them. But should it happen, O beloved Christian, that thou art sometimes snatch'd away by these busy Intruders, and dost wander out a little into the Creatures, flee thou strait to his Name for thy Refuge: Here take up, here rest; for hereby shall thine Enemies, even as many as would slay thy Soul, be scatter'd as the Dust, and driven as the Chaff before a mighty Wind.

Marvellous are the Experiences of devout Persons, as to this Matter, which confirm the Truth of all what here has been said. Attend therefore diligently, and love to be much alone with thy Jesus: And whensoever thou art molested by the things that are without, then use thy self to invoke his Name for Succour; and confidently ejaculate forth thy Soul as into his Arms in some short ardent Breathing. And whether thou art at Home, or whether thou art Abroad, still be thou communing with him in Spirit: And let his Name be to thee at all times, and in all Places, for a Shield; which thou oughtest not through Carelesness, or Cowardice, to let drop, as thou valuest thy Life. Call to mind the most sacred Vows and Ties thou art under, remember that thou art a Soldier list'd in his Service, that thou art solemnly sworn to fight under the Banner of his Cross to thy Life's end: And go not off from thy Watch, to which thou art appointed. Keep thy Soul in thy Hands wheresoever thou art, have a strict Eye over thy self:

And strive closely to follow the Steps of thy Lord, walking after him in all Humility and Patience. Particularly forget not the Resolution of this Day, which thou madest in the Morning : This thou art too apt to let slip out of thy Memory ; but be careful, and take good heed to it, that so at Night thou mayst have a comfortable Reflection of the Day past, and therewith lie down in Peace. Look to thy Intention always that it be upright and pure : And that thy Heart be habitually directed in all things to the Divine Glory ; setting Christ continually before thine Eyes in whatever thou dost, that he may be both the Author and the Perfecter in thee of every good Word and Work. Watch every where : For every where there are Snares of the malicious Enemy laid to catch wandering Souls.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Guard of the Outward Senses.

THERE is no safer Place for a Servant of God in this World, than a still retired Room ; where undisturbed and unobserved, he can pray unto the Father with a free Mind, shutting out whatever would crowd in from without. If thou hast then such a Convenience, keep that, and that shall keep thee. There is always Danger in thy going from Home, unless upon necessity or Duty : But the abiding within, where thou hast Time and Opportunity for Holy Retirement, is certainly the Rest of a most devout Life. Whosoever accustoms himself to withdraw much into his Chamber, or Closet, and there to wait upon God, and commune with him in the Deep of the Soul ; shall soon draw thence the Peace of Heart,
which

which passeth the Natural Man's Understanding, and shall be defended from very great and many Dangers. Solitude is the Mother of Devotion: But the Crowd is a troubler of it. Christ who could not be hinder'd in a Crowd, or Multitude, yet withdrew himself from it. He withdrew himself, we find, frequently out of the Crowd, either to a Mountain, or a Desert, or a Garden, or the like, that he might pray his Father in secret: And there is no doubt at all to be made, but that this is written of him for our Information, as well as Comfort; and that we ought therefore to make him herein our Pattern, by a prudent Retreat, as much and as often as is possible, and as is consistent with our Vocation in the World, and the Lot whereto we are appointed of Providence.

The Solitary Life is generally a Friend of Peace; and is acceptable to God and his Angels; who are sent of him to minister in the Wilderness to his hidden Ones, and are delighted in the Conversation of such who love Privacy and Purity: He that can receive it, let him receive it: But to all it is not given: for all are not call'd to it. Some are rather call'd to an active Life upon the Stage of this present World, and others to a mixt sort of Life, betwixt this and the former. Let each one be sure to observe carefully the Call of God, and the Station wherein Providence hath placed him.

He that is in Spirit truly retired, hath the Kingdom of God in silence: And the end of such an one is, having renounc'd all Worldly Things, to give up himself wholly unto God, and to wait on him in Pureness of Heart, and Watchfulness of the Mouth. Valiant is he who overcomes the World: But still more valiant is he who overcomes himself, and that perfectly; by a voluntary Conformity to the Poverty of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by a full and peremptory Renunciation of one's own Will, and Resignment

signment of it up into the Hands of the Father of our Lord, and our Father also in Him. Deny therefore thy self in all things for Christ's sake: Withdraw thy self out of the Multitude for his sake, and to be with him: Deliver up thy Will into God's Hand, without reserve, for the Love of him; and that thou may'st Imitate him in this great Point, to the Honour of his Name. And especially thou must take heed, if thou would'st be kept from outward Distractions and spiritual Loss, not to entangle thy self with the Concerns of others. What thou hast no Commission for, see thou intermeddle not with, either by Word or Deed. Should'st thou see things done which are not right, yet do not Judge rashly of Facts; the Circumstances of which may possibly be unknown to thee. Deliberate well before thou speakest, that thou be not surprized in a Word.

Be very cautious of being too much Abroad; and, where there is no need, be not forward to go. If either Authority commands, or Usefulness requires; if it be either in Obedience to thy Lawful Superiors, or in Discharge of thy private Duty or Obligation; observe in thy going forth still a decent and comely Discipline, and a prudent and easie Deportment; and return quickly again to thy own Privacy. Now, when thou art abroad in Company, keep thine Eyes diligently, stop thine Ears against Rumours, refrain thy Tongue, and employ thine Heart in some good Meditation. Before thou goest out of thy Chamber, or House, use some short Ejaculatory Prayer, for the Divine Grace to keep thee in thy Ways, such as this:

“ Make my Way straight, O Lord my God,
“ in thy sight: Make firm my Steps in thy ^{Psal. xvii.}
“ Paths, that I may never tread out of the Way.
“ The Lord Jesus be with me always on the Way;
“ and his Angel accompany me going forth, and
“ coming in.

In the midst of all thy Works, be ever mindful of thy Beloved Jesus, who discerneth all things that are under the Heaven, and searcheth the Hearts to the bottom in all places and Times. Fix thy Mind steadily upon him; so shall thy Heart be kept in Awe, and the Motions thereof from wandring. If thou hast a desire not to be ensnared, then do not look about thee much. The Eyes lead the Senses; and the Senses soon infect the wandring Heart. What avails it to look on that, which it's not permitted to have? That is often drawn in from without, by which the Interior Man is defiled and polluted. It is an hard matter to behold Beautiful Objects, and not to be affected with them. An Image, which is once view'd, and is not plucked out, doth either beget Hurt, or Strife, in the Fleshly Heart.

C H A P. V.

The great Duty of Recollection, both at Home and Abroad.

FOR the avoiding therefore both of the more open and hidden Snares, see that thou keep but little Company, so far as this is left to thy free Choice; and that thou continually stand as upon thy Watch-Tower, where-ever thou art, and in whatever Company; without suffering thy self to be tempted down from it. Prefer thy Home, let it be never so homely (as we say) to all that is most attractive Abroad, and that would divert and scatter thy Thoughts too much outwards. Returning therefore to thy little Chamber, or Oratory, here do thou fix the Anchor of Stableness, by fervent Prayer and devout Reading. For the Place, having been by thee specially consecrated
to

to Divine Service and Religious Exercifes, becomes a means of recalling thee inwards, and quickning thy Devotion: It endures thee not to abide in it long idle, or carelefly and deadly there to trifle away thy time. Presently bend thy Knees, and bow thy Head, with a Senfe of the Prefence of the Divine Majefty, or as if thou didft actually there behold Jefus Chrift crucified before thee: And fay in thy Heart with Faith, *O Lamb of God that takeft away the Sins of the World, have mercy upon me; have mercy upon me; and grant me thy Peace.*

Let Peace be in thy Houfe: And as for thy Chamber, in particular, let it be the *Chamber of Peace*. And if it fhall have pleafed the good God to blefs thee with a little quiet, and agreeable Room for thy devout Retirement, then forget not to give Thanks: And often repeat to thy felf with deep Attention, as confidering and contemplating in Faith the Ark of the Lord there prefent, thefe, or fome fuch Words as thefe: “ Surely this have I chofen to be an Habitation for me, “ O Lord my God: Here I will reft with thee; here “ I will dwell; becaufe it is a Place of my own choofing. “ Lord, it is good for us to be here; yea, above all “ the defirable things of the Earth moft defirable: “ For, lo! this Place *is Holy*.

Wherefore, as long as thou fhalt live in this Earthly Tabernacle, retire as much as thou canft from the worldly Crowd into thy fecret Chamber, where thou may’ft be alone with God, and keep up thy Converfation in Heaven; till at length thou put off this Burthen of Earth, and the Heavenly Paradife be open’d unto thee; with free admiffion into the Society of the Firft-born, who are the Kings and Priests of God for ever, reigning with Chrift, the Head of every Principality. Lead here then an Angelical Life, converfing with Heavenly Objects, and fulfilling the Will of God with all readinefs and cheerfulness; fo fhalt thou be made

made a fit Companion for Angels hereafter, when thou shalt be called into the Joy of thy Lord.

Now, for as much as there is a necessity for thee to be sometimes abroad in the World, the Society whereof is commonly as Pitch, defiling where-ever it toucheth; therefore when thou hast been from home, forbear not to examin thy self at thy return, where thou hast been, and what thou hast done or spoken. This will be no hard matter for thee, as thou shalt accustom thy self to it: For an Habit will render it very easie and familiar; and the Advantage hereof thou wilt find to be exceeding great. Hast thou fallen, rise up again in the Name of God; earnestly beg Forgiveness; lament thy own miserable Frailty, and that thou art so slightly turned aside from thy holy Resolution. What, I pray, hast thou gain'd, if thou hast lost God and Peace of Conscience in worldly Conference? Behold! without God all things are Vanity, all are Bitterness: But to meditate of God, is wonderful Sweetness to the Mind, is charming Delight to the Heart.

Would to God that thou would'st learn at least by thy loss, and be instructed by what thou hast already suffer'd; how absolutely necessary it is for thee to stand always on thy Guard, whatever the Company may be which thou art in; and to be exceeding cautious not to fall into a Snare, through the variety and multiplicity of Discourse that may offer it self. Hast thou wandred? Return at last unto thy self, however defiled or outwardly attracted. Recover in Secret what thou hast lost in Publick. Alas! It is seldom we go forth without Danger; and very seldom it is we return home without Hurt. Watch therefore, O Christian, with all Watchfulness; and being returned, enter into thy Closet, or secret Chamber, and shut the Door thereof; be silent for some while, and exclude all whatever might disturb or distract thy Thoughts. Be mindful of God alone; fix thy self

as

as in his Presence steadily ; and fervently beseech him so to establish thee with his *free Spirit*, as thou may'st be able to stand henceforward in every Temptation, and not to be drawn more from him into the Spirit of this World. So shall his Majesty not only repair what through thy Frailty hath been decay'd in thee, but also fill thee more abundantly than ever with his Grace, and strengthen thee in the inward Man : so as thou may'st day by day grow up still in Conformity to the Life of thy Jesus, till at length thou arrive at the Maturity of the wish'd-for Estate in Him ; and be numbred among the *strong Men*, who have overcome the Wicked One, and have the Word of God abiding in them, as a permanent Principle of Life, to secure them against all the Assaults of the World. Retire then within, be still, wait, pray, without fainting. I have seen many that have taken great Delight in gadding abroad for their Diversion : And I looked to see what Fruit they brought with them home ; and, behold ! it was either none at all, or else such as they had much better have been without.

In the time of Labour thy Mind may continue exercised with God : And forget not to have recourse to him at every turn with some short Prayer or other, such as may be most suitable and most affecting to thee. Ponder on some Verse out of the *Psalms*, or repeat to thy self some Word out of the *Gospel*, with which thou hast been lively touch'd at any time ; as also some Passage out of the *Epistles*, that is very strongly impressed on thee ; which may serve to comfort and support thee, to admonish thee also, and drive away the seeming Tedioufness of the Time. Thus while thou art at Work, thou performest a most acceptable Service and Sacrifice to Almighty God : And the Labour of thine Hands, being thus consecrated, shall praise thee in the Gates ; even in the Gates of *Jerusalem*, which is above ; and Strength and Honour shall be

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thy Clothing, and thou shalt rejoice in the Time to come with the Spirits of the Perfect Ones, who in the Days of their Flesh did thus also in like manner *Labour* and *Pray*. This is a true Observation: Would any one be glad to make a considerable Progress in the Service of God, and to persevere in it to the end, then let such a Person fail not, either in being diligent at Work, or fervent in Prayer. For by Diligence in thy Vocation, as well as by Fervour in Prayer, thou truly serveest God, so long as thou holdest this method which is here proposed: Only keep thy Heart, and suffer not the Affections thereof to be poured forth toward Visible Objects. While the Hands work, the Heart may pray.

But should wandering and impertinent Thoughts crowd in upon thee never so fast, be not thou hereat discouraged, O Soldier of Christ; but run to thy usual Arms of Prayers and Meditations. And for this end it is farther advisable, that thou pitch on some particular Point of the Passion of Christ, or other suitable Subject.

C H A P. VI.

Of Holy Vigilance.

THERE are many and great Duties, which I am obliged to, merely as an Human and Reasonable Creature; of which the Philosophers, by the Light of Nature only, have treated at large: And truly excellent Patterns there are of them that have liv'd up to that Light. There are others again, and greater than these, which I stand obliged to, not as *Man*, but as *Christian*; And which I am bound by express Vow, and most solemn Pact and Agreement, to perform, through

through the Assistance of the Grace of my God, which he hath promised. Moreover, there are also different Degrees of Christian Duties and Holiness, as there are different Ages and Statures in the Mystical Body; together with a great variety of Vocations and Circumstances, either more outward or inward. Now as for me, who have had several Advantages above many others, and who am not only a Christian by Baptismal Consecration; but am also a *Christian Devote*, lying under more peculiar and eminent Ties of Serving God, and following Christ fully, through the special Favours and Graces which I have received; it must needs be incumbent on such an one, to press after the very highest Degrees of Duty; since a more than ordinary Pitch of Sanctity is there for certain required, where the Assistance afforded is beyond what is common.

M. Wherefore banish Sloth from thy Heart, and let Drowsiness depart from thine Eyes: Shake off Dulness, expel Heaviness, tread down the Daintiness and Softness of the Flesh, put on a good Courage, and be early at the Divine Service, and the Duties of thy Vocation. Be thou ready and prepared for all those things which thou shalt know thy self bound to perform: Because great shall be thy Reward, and infinite the Glory which the Lord thy Saviour shall graciously confer upon thee.

Loiter not in thy Bed, when it is time for thee to Rise: But accustom thy self to Rise early, and to be quick also in Dressing thy Body. For this purpose be thou mindful of the Words of the Lord Jesus, rousing up his Disciples: *Why sleep ye?* said he, *Rise and Pray, lest ye enter into Temptation.* Luk. xxii. Read also and ponder the Saying of St. Paul, Rom. xiii. *Now it is high time to awake out of Sleep:* For now are our Eyes opened, that we may rise unto Christ, as out of a dead Sleep: Say then in thy Heart with

Faith, "Awake, O my Soul, unto Righteousness; for
 "thy Night surely is far spent, and the Day of thy
 "Salvation is at hand; even nearer at hand than thou
 "canst easily believe. Why sleepest thou thus? Why
 "in such a Slumber? *Rise, and Pray.* Cast off the
 "Covering of Darkness, with all the Works thereof,
 "as the Bed-Clothes that lie upon thee; and put
 "thou on the Lord Jesus Christ, with the whole Ar-
 "mour of Light: And make not Provision for the
 "Flesh, but for the Spirit. *Rise then, and Pray;* be-
 "ing obedient to thy Lord's Word.

C H A P. VII.

*Preparation for, and Attendance at, the Publick
 Worship.*

WHEN thou art risen, make haste to Worship;
 and intermit not an opportunity of being
 early at the Church, when and where it is in thy
 Power. But first be sure to dress thy Soul, and to
 order thy Steps. And never let Worldly Matters
 take up thy Mind, without there be a present and ab-
 solute necessity, at the first of the Day. Let no
 Pretence ordinarily hinder thee from assisting at the
 solemn Services of the Church, with the first, both
 Morning and Evening; and let all Private Duties tend
 to fit thee for, and to improve the Publick; that in
 the holy Assemblies thou may'st bear a better part
 with Saints and Angels, and more glerifie and mag-
 nifie God. Go therefore with all due Preparation;
 and hearing the Bell to Ring in, make haste, that thou
 get there in season, before the Service begin; and say
 to thy self, "This is the Signal of the great King,
 "let me go and worship Him.

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When thou art come, let the Place of his Worship appear Beautiful to thee: Shake off the Dust from thy Feet, *put off thy* bemired *Shoes*, leaving behind all inferior and corrupt Affections, or whatever may be said to touch the Earth; and enter into his Courts with a profound Sense and Veneration of his Holiness. Abide therein all the while with Fear and Reverence, Praying before his Footstool, and praising the Name of the Lord most High. Be entirely drawn and collected into thy self, and firmly intent upon God. Diligently hear God's Words, which are there Read or Sung. Be not wearied with thy Attendance; nor think it too long that thou art here employed in this so Honourable Service: But constrain thy Body to serve the Spirit, and rouse up the Mind that is ready to flag. For oftentimes there is new Grace given of God, to those that persist stedfastly, notwithstanding the Weight that oppresseth them, either of Nature or Disease; and that are not discouraged presently thro' the want of *sensible Devotion*; but do wrestle in Prayer with their Bodily Infirmities, as becometh the faithful Disciples of Christ Jesus: Who here are called to *Watch unto Prayer*, in the Communion of all Saints; that so by the Union of many Spirits in one, there may be a mutual Supply unto every Member, according as it requireth, in the fellowship of the same Spirit, and Performance of the same Spiritual Service; and that their Supplications and Thanksgivings, thus united, may more powerfully ascend, and be as an Incense of most sweet Savour before the Throne of God in the Heavens. Continue then but to Watch as thou oughtest, without being too much concern'd for the Uneasiness which thou perhaps feelest; and remain assured, that God will give thee his Grace, and accept the Sacrifice which thou offerest, howsoever imperfect in it self it may be. If then thou perceivest little or no Relish in the Lessons when they are read, or in the

Prayers or Psalms when thou joineſt in them ; acknowledge thine Infirmitie humbly, expect the Grace of God confidently, and perſevere to the End reſolutely. For the Lord will come, and not ſtay : Yea, he cometh unto thee, O Soul, that art heavy and caſt down ; he cometh, without any delaying, to thy help ; and he will viſit the Deſolate that crieth unto him, and ſeekth him with a loving Deſire. Then ſhall thine Heart be ſtruck with Wonderment, and ſhall be enlarged in all things, which thou ſhalt either Hear or Read, while thou art waiting in the Lord's Houſe : And thou ſhalt underſtand how Manifold and Wonderful his Law is. And Bleſſed is the Man, whom he teacheth his Teſtimonies, ſhalt thou then ſay : Yea, Bleſſed is the Man whom the Lord thus viſiteth ; and whoſe Heart is thereby diſpoſed to fulfil his Commandments at all times, and with great diligence, being made ſtrong in Faith and Love.

C H A P. VIII.

Of External Acts and Geſtures in Divine Worſhip.

NOW there are ſome things, which poſſibly may appear in themſelves very Inſignificant, which yet often contribute not a little to the Quickning of Devotion, and the exciting of the Soul, when it begins to be ſeized with Drowſineſs or Dulneſs. There are certain outward Actions and Geſtures, which have in them a ſort of Natural Tendency, however by many not obſerved, or inconfiderately ſlighted, to aſſiſt the devout Soul in her Religious Exerciſes, both ſolemn and private, according to the ſeveral kinds and parts, which muſt diligently be heeded ; and to expreſs the inward Affections and Diſpoſitions in ſuch a manner,

manner, as thereby also the more to inkindle and enflame what may sometimes lie in us as hidden under the Ashes. Therefore Bowing, Kneeling, Prostration, and other good Customs, ought not to be neglected of thee; neither wilt thou by any means despise them, if thou art wise; but wilt with all Humility, yet without any Affectedsness, observe them; that so the dull Bodies, which are apt to be soon tired out, may hereby be rouzed almost continually, and kept in a more watchful posture.

All these Actions, if duly performed, however otherwise inconsiderable in themselves, are of no mean acceptance with Almighty God. I say, *if duly performed*, that is, obediently, prudently, and humbly; else they avail thee not. For, in one Word, without the Spirit of Life do accompany and animate them, all is but as a mere Farce, or a dead Puppet-Worship; but with this Animation it becomes a *Reasonable Service*, and is accordingly of great Power and Efficacy. For thus our very Lord Jesus Christ himself, when the Hour of his Passion was drawing near, kneeled down, and fell on his Face, and prayed the Father. So also the Protomartyr St. *Stephen* kneeled down, and prayed for his Persecutors. St. *Peter* likewise kneeled down, and so raised up to Life the Dead Widow by Prayer, assisted with outward Gesture. *Mary Magdalene*, by bowing her Body, and looking into the Sepulchre, had a sight of the Holy Angels, as she *stooped down*. St. *Paul* observed this too, that so taking his solemn Leave of the Elders of the Church in *Asia*, he *kneeled down, and prayed with them all*. Stand therefore reverently, as it becometh the Servants of Christ; or kneel devoutly, or prostrate thy self humbly, as thou art obliged; omitting nothing of what is required of thee by the Rules of thy holy Institution, or by the common Practice of the

Matt. xxvi.
Luke xxii.

Acts vii.

Acts ix.

John xx.

Acts xx.

Church, as to all such Externals or Circumstantials. Let not Laziness or Indifferency be seen in thy sitting; but use a composed and attentive Posture: When thou sittest, sit as the Prophet *David sat before the Lord*; diligently recollect thy Spirit, and earnestly bow thine Ear to what thou hearest of the Divine Word.

And as on one side thou must labour to shake off all Dulness and Tepidness, and to shun all Appearance thereof in thy Behaviour, while at Church: So likewise oughtest thou here always to avoid every shew of Lightness and Inconstancy, in the manner of thy standing; or moving up and down, or in looking about thee, and taking notice of what is there done by others, or of any outward and worldly Appearances. Let there not be respect of Persons in the House of Prayer; but keep diligently thy Foot when thou entrest into it; and while thou art there, let not thy Eye go after a few Flies, for as much as thou art in the presence of the Majesty of Heaven and Earth.

Shew in thy Behaviour here a Modesty mix'd with a Religious Cheerfulness, as becometh a sincere and devout Christian. And lest thou be diverted by the Company that is near thee, or disturbed by the Confusion and Indevotion of some that may be there, as to their Bodies only, while their Minds are gadding elsewhere; look thou stedfastly before thee, be intent with all thy might upon what thou art busied; observe the Minister of God, as representing to thee the Person and Office of Christ; and specially direct thine Eye towards the holy Table and Altar, and thine Heart thereby to the Consideration of those most August Mysteries, which the Angels themselves are delighted here to look into. To do any thing in an Holy Place that is unseemly, or uncomely, shall not pass unpunished. Where God is specially Present, and his holy Angels do frequent, there for certain thou dost very foolishly to intermeddle at all with Temporal Matters.

Matters. Art thou in his Presence, and in theirs too, as his immediate Attendants? It behoveth thee verily to watch with all diligent heed, to think only upon what is Divine and Heavenly; and not to touch the Earth, or what is Earthly, in thy Thoughts. Remember therefore the Call and Admonition of Christ, speaking to thee by the Priest, and saying, * *Lift up your Hearts*; and do thou * *Sursum Corda*. not only answer with the Mouth, but let thy Heart echo back to the same, and be accordingly *lifted up*. So shall the King of Glory come unto thee; and he will prepare himself an Habitation in thee, and abide with thee.

When thou goest at any time through a Church, or a Church-yard, call to mind the Day of thy Death, unknown to thee. Look also upon the Sepulchres of the Dead; whom in a short while thou art to follow, and shalt be cover'd with Earth in like manner, and no more thought of than now they are. Earth thou art, and to Earth thou shalt return, to be trodden under Foot of Men. Remember thy last End: Lo! all things pass away as a Shadow, and their Image perisheth out of the Land.

C H A P. IX.

Conversation at Meals.

BEfore thou sittest down to Meals, lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, and say with the Prophet in the *Psalms*, or meditate by Faith in the Heart, after this manner, viz. *The Eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord; and thou givest them their Meat in due Season.* Be therefore watchful, that thou neither Eat nor Drink out of Season, or so as to prejudice any

any ways thy self by what was given for thy Good. Thou shalt also pray with the Prophet, saying, *Thou shalt feed us, Lord, with the Bread of Tears, and shalt give us to drink of Tears in Measure.*

Eat with Modesty, and the Fear of God; giving Thanks from thy Heart, and sanctifying all whatever thou takest in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Have in Remembrance the manner of his eating and drinking with his Disciples, when he was upon the Earth, and especially of his last most holy *Supper*, and Passover, which he kept with them just before his Departure; and of all that he then said and did for an Example and a Memorial unto all his true Followers to the end of the World. Reflect very particularly what a wonderful Pattern he set before thee by him of Humility and Charity towards thy Christian Brethren, in his washing the Feet of his Disciples, and Attendance upon them in the Form of a Servant: And ponder and ruminare in thy Heart what he then

said to them, and now says to thee, *I have*
 Joh. xiii. *given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done to you: The Servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent than he that sent him.* Happy art thou if thou both knowest this, and dost it; exercising thy self with all Lowliness and Condescension, in Acts of Compassion and Charity, Spiritual and Bodily, according to thy Power.

The Order of thy Profession is founded upon Him, and upon the Apostolical Way of Living: According to that *Rule* which he himself gave, and by his own holy Example hath confirmed: Which verily could not be for the first Ages of his Church only, but for all the succeeding ones even to this very Day, and to the Consummation of the World; that we should all who bear his Name do, even as he hath done to us. For to every one of us in like manner is the Charge given, as from his holy Mouth, *Verily, verily, I say*
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unto you. Listen therefore to the Voice of thy Lord, O Beloved in Christ, whensoever thou sittest down at the Table: And never turn thy Face from thy poor Brother, or Sister, that so thy Lord's Face may not be turned away from thee. But be merciful after thy Power, in the Humility of Love; And if thou hast but a little, do thy Diligence gladly to give even of that little. And if thou hast nothing, yet let thy Heart be liberally minded: And be sure never to forget thy good Benefactors, and Friends, if his Goodness shall have raised thee any to supply thy Bodily Necessities; but let them be represented before thy God and Saviour, and offer'd up continually with Intercession and Thanksgiving. Glorifie him in all, and bless his holy Name for all.

For, consider thou must, that whatever thy State or Portion may here be, it is God who opens his *Hands*, after this or that manner, so filling *all things living with Plenteousness*: That he that *gathereth little* may have *no lack*, and he that *gathereth much* may have *nothing over*. Let therefore the Lord thy God, whether thou aboundest, or whether thou wantest be glorified, who hath ordained such a Provision for all: And address thy self to him in Faith for the *Bread* of the Day, not without diligent seeking it also according to the Order of his Providence; and see when thou hast it, that thou keep it not beyond the Command; lest it *breed Worms*, and *stink*, and so the Wrath of the Lord be kindled against thee, for thy hoarding up of that which thou oughtest to have communicated for the Necessities of the Brethren, laying up in Store thereby for thy self, *a good Foundation against the time to come.*

If thou seest the outside of the Cup, and of the Platter, made clean, call to mind the Words of the Lord, who said, *Cleanse first that which is within.*

Be not thou therefore like to the *Blind*

Matt. xxiii.
Pharisee,

Pharisee, in a superstitious Regard to thine outward Behaviour; neglecting in the mean time the more inward Life and Spirit of Religion. For nothing is more deplorable, as well as ridiculous, than to appear *Beautiful outward*, and to be *within full of Uncleaness*: To be outwardly righteous unto Men, and not to be inwardly so unto God, and in the Sight of his holy Angels, who diligently observe thee, as the Eyes of the Divine Majesty running to and fro upon the Earth. Keep therefore a Watch before thy Mouth, but above all before thy Heart: As understanding and duly recollecting, that *not that which goeth into the Mouth defileth a Man: But that which cometh out of the Mouth this defileth a Man*. For from within, out of the Heart, proceed evil Thoughts, with the whole Train of Evils, which defile the Man. Hear, and understand: For thou knowest well whose Doctrine it is.

So eat, and so drink, in the Fear of God continually, as not to administer Fuel at any time to Evil. Let not what is given thee for Good, be made a Snare unto thee: And thou hereby be hurt either in thy *Mind*, through Temptations, or in thy *Body*, by Diseases: Or hinder thy self either in the Services of thy Master, or in thine own Affairs.

Dinner or Supper being over, let not thy Mind however be presently bent with too great Earnestness: Yet take diligent heed of the Breaches of Time, and see that these do not put thee too far out of the way, or interrupt thee too long. And because when the Body is refreshed, we are generally more prone to talk and laugh; therefore have then an especial Care to bridle thy Mouth with Prudence, that thou *offend not in thy Tongue*. Expend not more time than is necessary in providing for the Body, that it faint not: And return again to the Duty of thy Calling, as soon as conveniently thou canst.

Be mindful of poor *Lazarus*, who was carry'd into *Abraham's* Bosom, after a Life here in great Want and Penury : And of the rich Glutton, who was buried in Hell, after having here fared sumptuously every Day.

Learn, in a word, to imitate the Model and Life of J E S U S, with all Lowliness and Simplicity of Heart : Copy after him in the manner of his Conversation at the Table : whereof the holy Gospel affords thee sundry Instances. Take up thy Cross daily, overcoming thy Defects, and manfully resisting Temptations. For as much as the Body being refreshed, the Flesh is thereby more ready and vigorous to tempt : Whence it is to be kept under by the means of Labours and Studies, such as are both proper in this Case, and suited to thy Calling. Take a strict account of thy self : And for Business both ordinary and extraordinary allot thou the fittest Time ; and having first attended upon God, be diligent to dispatch the same in Humility, Obedience and Charity.

If thou canst not presently after Meals set upon those Matters that are greater and more important, be yet gladly employ'd about somewhat that is of lesser Consequence. Never indulge thy self at all in Sloth, nor take pleasure in vain Tales, and foolish Jestings. Consider that thou art bound to set thy self a Guard, and thy Brother a good Example.

C H A P. X.

Consideration of God's good Pleasure, and Confidence under Adversity.

IN every thing therefore that is to be done, either within or without, seek thou diligently the good Pleasure of Almighty God : And be sure to prefer his greater Honour, before all thy own private Advantages ; and the general Good of his Church before any particular Interest, or Satisfaction. If any thing that is sorrowful and cross befall thee, be not thereupon cast down with sudden Fear ; but humbly flee unto the Lord, who forsake not them that put their Trust in him. But all them that presume in themselves doth God humble : Yea, he doth confound in their own Craftiness the Confident. As for all the Children in the Kingdom, they have been proved, and daily are proved, with many Crosses and Adversities : That so being humbled in the Truth, and purified in this present, they may be more gloriously exalted in the World to come.

When thou art at any time overtaken, or fallest into any excess, let not thy Heart thereat be cast down : Neither do thou presently despair, when master'd by ill Habit, or sudden Surprize. But acknowledge thy Guilt, and confess thy Transgression, begging pardon for the same through Christ's Merits, and purposing firmly to amend, and to take heed for the future according to all those Obligations thou standest in.

The presumptuous Person quickly despairs in Adversity : But the humble, when he is persecuted, and suffers all manner of Contempt and Reproach, puts so much the more his Trust in God, has a greater and surer Confidence, is better fortified and satisfied ; and by being pressed the more down, rises up still higher ;

higher, and gets above all the Weights that would clog his Ascent to God.

He that regards not either the Humours of the World, or Temporal Lucre, may go any where securely and joyfully: But he shall not fail to meet with Anguish, who followeth after Earthly things.

Out of Brotherly Love and Holy Obedience omit such things as more particularly concern thee: And do those things which may be more profitable, though not so agreeable to thee; yea should they be even contrary, it may be sometimes good for thee to be humbled after this manner, and so to learn the entire subduing of thy Will to God's. God will supply all things, and that much better than thou canst imagine, where ought is omitted by thee upon these Motives. But should there an Injury happen to be done thee in this Case, whether by Superiors or Equals, consider that this is no more than what thou hast well deserved. Wherefore readily and gladly forgive whatever Injuries thou sufferest from any hand, and all outwards Evils whencesoever, or by whomsoever inflicted: That so God may of his abundant Mercy again forgive thee all thy Offences. Should any one speak roughly to thee, contend not again with such an one morosely: But patiently bear thou the Infirmities of thy Brother; and with soft and prudent Discourse teach him that is undisciplin'd. If any Man offend not in Word, the same is a perfect Man, saith St. James. Would to God that thou didst labour to utter as many good and holy words, as thou hast heretofore spoken vain ones. And for some amends therefore of so many idle and hurtful Words which thou hast been guilty of, learn either to hold thy Peace with true Compunction of Heart, or else to speak discreetly with just Deliberation, so as to edifie those that hear thee. Thus look both to thy self, and to thy Company, into which thou shalt come: That thou

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be not the worse for them, but the better; nor they the worse any way for thee, but the better, both by thy Silence and thy Speech.

C H A P. XI.

Examination at Night.

EVening being come, thou must enter upon the Examination of thy Conscience, and the State of the Day past. Herein thou art to make diligent Inquiry, what Advancement thou hast made, or what Loss thou hast sustained; what thou hast committed, or omitted; how thou hast performed thy Exercises of Religion, both outward and inward; and whether thou feelest an Increase or Decrease of holy Fervour and Vigilance in the Spiritual Course.

Spare not thy self in the Discovery or the Correction of thy Faults; but implead thy self impartially for all of them; arraign and judge thy self for all, which, through thy own Folly and Iniquity, thou hast done. Run over the Particulars in thy Mind, according to such certain Heads as are to be found in many Books of Devotion, and especially such as purposely treat of Examination for the Holy Communion. Think on what has passed with thee at Home or Abroad, at thy Work or Study, Alone or in Company, in thy Chamber, at the Table, or at Church. Thou art Guilty; see thou confess, and deny it not: For to plead *Not Guilty*, is here most certain Condemnation.

Say unto thy Soul: "When wilt thou, O Soul, amend this? *When* thinkest thou to satisfy God, "Angels and Men? Or, *How* dost thou think ever "to make the least Satisfaction to him or them? Alas! "alas! poor Soul, what art thou here capable of? For
"thou

“ thou art a Debtor unto all ; and to pay all these
“ thy Debts, thou hast but one little mite. *What
is that ?* That is the Confession of the Mouth out of
the true Contrition of Heart. Whereby there is full
Satisfaction made, through the Grace of the Lord
Christ communicated to thee ; who, by his own Pay-
ment for thee, taketh away the Hand-writing which
was against thee, and maketh thee a Free-Man ; that
thou may’st serve him, and walk before him, all the
remaining Days of thy Life, *in Righteousness* Luke i.
and true Holiness.

Acknowledge therefore thy Sins unto the Lord be-
fore thou liest down, that he may forgive the Wicked-
ness thereof, and say with the Psalmist, *I will* Psal. xxxii.
confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, who
is faithful and just to *forgive* me my Sins, and then to
cleanse me from all Unrighteousness. *For this shall*
every one that is Godly pray unto thee, in a time when
thou may’st be found, or in a Seasonable Time. Since
that the most Seasonable Time for the Recollection of
the Heart, that hath been in the Day-time dissipated
and distracted through the variety of Businessess, seems
to be the Hour of Complin, or just before thy going
to Bed ; which is appointed unto a Rest of holy Va-
cation, for the stilling and calming the Conscience,
by ballancing the Affairs of the Day, and making all
things even betwixt God and thee, through the Con-
fession of Faith and Repentance.

Wo unto him that carelessly lets this Hour pass ;
and that from Hour to Hour, and from Day to Day,
lengthens out Discourses, though of little or no Edi-
fication ; but that hardly so much as once in a Day
examines the State of his own Heart, which yet it
would be necessary for him to do every Hour : For as
much as, let thy Indifferency herein be never so great,
God will not suffer ought to go undiscover’d, or un-
punish’d, unless thou Repent ; but will require of

thee the Talent entrusted to thee, even to the very utmost Farthing. For he hath given to us every one, Sense and Understanding, and appointed us the Law of Life and Discipline, that we might do well, and proceed on always to what is better: But he hath not given unto any Time, that it should be idly and vainly trifled away. Return, Return therefore unto thy self, O wretched Man, tho' it be late, tho' it be even the last Hour of the Day: For thou knowest not when the Lord will come, or when thou shalt be called to give an account of the Work of thy Day.

C H A P. XII.

Exercises on the Bed.

After the Examination and Scrutiny of thy Conscience made before thou goest to sleep, accustom to arm thy self with some good Meditation, or Exercise of Mental Prayer, the Matter of which may be any part of the holy Gospel, or such good Subject as the Soul most relishes, or is best suited to thy present State.

Call upon God, through Christ, with enflamed Aspirations, and commend thy self wholly into his gracious Keeping; that so he may give a Charge unto his holy Angels to watch over thee, guard thee from Evil, and repel the Illusions of the Night: So shall thy Sleep not be Bestial; but Sober, Chaste and Quiet. A good Watch over the Heart and Senses by Day, promotes sober Rest at Night. For the Images of those things, which we are busied about when Awake, readily present themselves to us when Asleep.

Let thy Bed be to thee a kind of Sepulchre, in which
thou

thou art about to rest for a little while, thence to rise again quickly to celebrate the Divine Praises, and to perform the Duties and Exercises of the holy Religion which thou professest, O Disciple of Christ. The more prepared that thou liest down to Rest, the more prepared also wilt thou be to Rise up. Thou shalt be so much the more Lively and Cheerful in the Morning, as thou wert when thou wentest to Bed more Strict and Severe.

When thou art laid down in thy Bed, use thy self to think over in thy Heart, or even softly to repeat with thy Mouth, some devout Hymn, Canticle or Psalm, till thou beginnest sweetly to drop asleep.

Let the last Words of Christ, which he spake on the Cross giving up the Ghost, be, in Remembrance of his Death, and in Preparation for thine own, through the virtue thereof, faithfully ruminated upon, and devoutly breathed forth, lifting up thine Eyes and Heart to Heaven: "*Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit*; for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of Truth, through the exceeding great Love of thy Son, the Son of thy Love.

Luke xxiii.
Psal. xxxi.

Compose thy self in Bed decently; let there appear a certain Modesty and Reverence in the very laying and ordering thy Members: Uncover not thy Body irreverently, because of the holy Watchers, who are commanded to keep the Servants of God; neither frequently turn and toss thy self; but lie thou still, and as upon thy Guard, mindful of thy Lord Christ hanging on the Cross, and of his falling asleep thereupon by Death, which is made unto thee Life.

If in the Night thou feelest thy self to be tempted by the Flesh or the Devil; if Fear falls upon thee, or thou art scared with Dreams, or art disturbed by any Passion of the Mind whatever, that so thou art not able quietly to take thy Rest: Have recourse imme-

diately to Prayer, and call by Faith upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in some short fervent and quiet Aspirations, sent forth like Darts ; and take up by Meditation the Cross, together with the Scourge, the Bitter Cup, the Crown of Thorns, the Spear, and the whole Armour of thy Crucified Jesus, to fight therewith against the wicked Enemy ; who will soon by this means be made to flee. Fear him not at all ; while thou art thus armed, it is impossible for him to do thee any hurt. Be then Courageous in the Power of that Name, whereby thou art called, and under which thou art a listed and sworn Soldier, to fight for thy Lord's Honour, and for thine own Welfare, to the last. They that are with thee are more than they that are against thee.

Call likewise to mind the Tortures of the holy Martyrs, the Constancy of the magnanimous Confessors, and the mighty Trophies of the Virgins. Think how some of these were tortured, not accepting Deliverance ; how others were cruelly mocked and scourged ; how some were stoned, others sawn asunder ; some slain by the Sword, and others by wild Beasts ; some Burnt, some Crucified, some Flea'd alive, some broken on Wheels, &c. Consider attentively the Gridiron of *Laurence*, the Clubs of *Marcellus*, the Nails of *Vincent*, the Wheel of *Catherine*, the Flames of *Agnes*, the sharp-pointed Shells of *Agatha*, the boiling Waters of *Cecilia*, the Teeth of wild Beasts, horrid Dungeons, and most heavy Bonds of the Saints. So by the Grace of God pondering on these things, thou shalt overcome Fire by Fire, shalt confound the Devil, shalt Honour the Saints, and shalt sleep in the Peace of Christ, taking sweet Repose.

In the Night, after thy Sleep, it is not to be wonder'd at, if thou at first feel thy self as it were drown'd in thy Bodily Senses ; whence impertinent Thoughts of the World, or other Vanities, will be apt to press
into

into thy Mind. But labour thou, by all possible means, to quicken thy Heart towards God, so soon as thou awakest, and to draw in thy Thoughts from outward Objects, and the vain Imaginations, that of themselves are continually crowding in upon thee. For this end enter thou into some Spiritual Thoughts, or Meditations, as was said before: Let the Remembrance of thine own Frailties, and of the Omnipotent Power of the Divine Grace, be continually before thee.

C H A P. XIII.

The Exercise of Obedience.

THE safest Way to Heaven, is to abide in Obedience, and live under Discipline. For he who submits himself to Man for God's sake, shall receive a special Grace of the Lord here, and be hereafter exalted in the Glory of the Saints. So long shall there be Strife and Contention in Man, as he continues in his own Will. God ought always to be consider'd as the Cause and Reason of our Obedience to Superiors, whether they be Civil or Ecclesiastical. Much safer is it to Obey than to Command.

Soon shall he arrive at Peace, who soon submits and Obeys. *The Obedient Man declareth Victories*, saith the wise Proverb: *But he that recoileth back, shall strike himself against the Pricks, and shall fall.* If the Life of him that is set over thee by God, be not so Perfect and Praise-worthy as his State and Order might require, thou nevertheless dost well by obeying him in that which is Good; for as much as thou art not from Man, but from God, to expect thy Reward.

Learn patiently to bear thy present Governour; if thou hadst not him, thou mightest perhaps have a

worse. Thou must have one or other; and never shalt thou find one perfectly in all things to thy liking, search thou after never so many. A good Disciple never had so bad Master, as that he could not be Benefitted by him, or that he might not reap Good to himself from Humility and Obedience in all things lawful.

By the Example therefore of Christ and of his Saints, study thou, *for Christ's sake*, simply and purely to Obey, for the sake also both of Conscience and a good Name; and for the obtaining of Peace of Mind, and the Glory of Life Eternal. No Person lives so quietly, no Person dies so securely, as he that is truly Obedient, and in all things submitted to God, and to the Government by him appointed.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the more Inward Exercises.

FROM the more Outward, it is fit to proceed to the more Inward Exercises of Religion; from the Inferior to the Superior, from the Corporeal to the Spiritual. The Disciple of Christ follows on gradually, by little, and little, learning to tread in his blessed Master's Steps; and that by the means of daily Exercises; whereby both Body and Soul are brought at last under Subjection to the holy Discipline of his Cross. And though at first many of these may be heavy and burthensome, yet being brought into a Custom, they become both light and pleasant.

In all thy Exercises have regard to thy Ground, or the Spring and Center, from which they proceed; and above all, have care of keeping thy Interior, and that thy Heart be not possessed of vain and useless Matters,

Matters, which may break in upon thee in the midst of thy Holy Exercises : Watch over the Motions of thy Soul; and take heed that no Disorder arise in it.

Do not imagine that Devotion consists In making long Prayers, or in being a great while at Church, and many times in a Day, or in any of the External Acts and Exercises of Religion, however in their Place and Order useful and laudable. No such matter : Devotion is a great Readiness and Facility of the Soul, to do and suffer all whatever it pleaseth God. This is the Exercise of all Exercises; and to which all the rest ought to tend.

When therefore thou shalt be content with all that God shall send thee, when thou shalt receive as willingly the Evil as the Good, when thou shalt be indifferent to every thing that can come from him, and when thou shalt feel an inward Joy and Cheerfulness to do his Commandments, and to suffer for the Love of Him; then shalt thou have some part of true Devotion. But after all, think not the better of thy self: Glorifie thou God, and confess thy self a poor unprofitable Servant.

C H A P. XV.

The Duty and Advantage of Prayer, Reading, and Work.

THere are three Exercises which are needful generally to a Religious Person, without which being performed, there is no subsistence long in an holy Course of Living: These are *Prayer, Reading, and Working*. In these must thou be sure daily to exercise thy self, and to be employed about one or other of them always.

Prayer enlightens, purifies and comforts the Soul ; it obtains Favour and Grace, drives away Melancholy, expels Drowsiness and Carelessness ; it eases the burthen of Labour, nourishes Devotion, and produces holy Confidence, and Hope that *maketh not ashamed* ; it puts to flight the Devil, and overcomes Temptation.

Let it not therefore be uneasie to thee to Pray, if thou desirest to be freed from Evil, and deliver'd from thine own Vices and corrupt Desires. Prayer is at all times needful, as well as Grace ; without which we cannot Spiritually Live. We ought ever to pray for Grace, because it is Grace that we stand so much in need of always, and every where. It is better to Pray than to Read ; yet in its season both ought to be done.

Reading ought to be as a sort of Prayer ; and before thou Readeest, let Prayer be offer'd up. Holy Reading instructs our Ignorance, solves Doubts, corrects Errors, teaches Morality, manifests Vice, encourages Virtue, excites to Zeal, strikes a holy Dread, gathers in the Spirit ; and lastly, refreshes and recreates the Mind.

And because thou canst not, as to the express Act, continually Pray and Read, therefore oughtest thou to operate and *work* outwardly somewhat or other : In which Operation or Work, let there be the Company of Prayer, both before, in the midst, and at the end of it. To work with the Hands after this manner, is both good for the Body, and serviceable to the Spirit ; it is an Edification of thy Neighbour, and a Reparation of thy Senses or Spirits, after too great Intension of them, either in Prayer or Study ; though sometimes we may be slothful and lazy, yet by persevering we overcome.

There is a labour both of the Body and of the Mind : Both are in their season Useful and Needful ;
and

and both, according to the different Station and Lot which Providence may have appointed to each one, are required of us. But that which is of the Body doth most tend to promote in us Humility, Obedience, Patience, Vigilance, and Dependance ; and being sanctified, according as thou art taught by the Example of Christ and his Saints, it may become truly an Act of Divine Service, and Religious Worship. Let therefore the whole Business of thy Employment, or whatever thou dost operate, whether in or out of the same being consecrated by Prayer ; and both begun, continued and ended in the Name of JESUS. Particularly, in whatever thou writest, let this Rule be constantly observ'd : Let God's Glory be still in thy Eye, submit herein to the Discipline of his most wise Providence with all Cheerfulness, and be sure to consider the Work of thy Calling, as the Will of God outwardly set before thee ; so shalt thou be accordingly blessed in it, and he shall *establish the Work* of thine *Hands upon thee*.

O how Devout have some of the Saints been, who Prayed without ceasing ! How Studious, who were never tir'd with holy Reading, and Meditation upon it ; yea, never could be enough satisfy'd therewith ! How fervent, lastly, and Zealous, whom no Labours were able to break, and no Work from without could any ways hinder, as to that deep and hidden Work which was within ! Without Prayer and Labour what great thing hath any ever attain'd to ? Be thou then Vigilant and Patient : Pray, Read, Labour.

Doth it go against the Grain of thee to Work ? Cross herein thy Nature. Whoever doth Violence to himself for God's sake, shall of God receive greater Grace, and shall quickly be changed into a Man in Christ. Bad Custom is changed by the contrary Good one ; and the Good Custom is at length turned into Nature.

Nature. That which was at first difficult, is afterwards made to appear both light and easie.

These three Exercises of Praying, Reading, and Working or Operating, we meet with to be perform'd by us at Church. For here is Prayer chiefly exercis'd in the Psalms, Hymns, and Collects. Here is also Reading in the Lessons, Epistles, and Gospels. Moreover, here is Working likewise, while we stand with the Body (or the like) and employ our Mouths in chanting forth alternately the Praises of Almighty God. This verily is a good and acceptable Operation of Body and Mouth: And a Working which both profiteth our selves not a little, and edifieth others who observe our Behaviour in the House of God, and are sensibly often quicken'd by such external Acts and Demonstrations as these.

Prayer is beautiful in the House of Prayer, when the Devotion of the Heart and the Order of the Church go along together. Sacred Reading is here also both comely and edifying: Therefore while the Lessons are read let your Mind be compos'd with all Attention and Reverence as to the express Word and Message of God from Heaven. And if there be a diligent Attention and Devout Observation, there is enough certainly to be learnt from the publick Service alone of the Church, and particularly from what is therein read to us out of the holy Scriptures. Here Jesus talketh with us, and we with him. He talketh with us, when we hear his Words, as when it is founded in our Ears, *Come unto me all that travel*; or when we are call'd of him to repent, for that *the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, or the like: We talk with him when we joyfully cry out, *Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ*; or when we utter to him in Faith, *Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father*, and so in numerous Instances besides. Thus also our Jesus speaking with us, saith, *Seek ye my Face*: And we presently

sently again speak with him, according as the holy Ghost hath of old instructed, saying, *Thy Face, Lord, will we seek.* And thus a mutual Conversation is kept up betwixt Christ and the devout Soul in the publick Offices of the Church, according to the several Parts thereof: He plainly telleth her, *I am thy Salvation;* and she as plainly telleth him, *Thou, Lord, art the thing that I long for, thou art my hope* Psal. lxxi. *from my Youth.* This now refers properly to the publick Exercises of Prayer and Reading in the Church: But yet the third, which is that of external Operation, is in no wise here to be left out. Since constantly to frequent the Church at the appointed Seasons, both early and late, where God hath granted Convenience and Leisure sufficient, is for certain an useful Work and fruitful Labour. For he is not idle who prays devoutly: Nay it is a very great Labour, for one to compose himself to Prayer, when the Flesh draweth him back, and he hath no Pleasure in it. Neither is he idle, who readeth the Scriptures, or heareth them read, or meditateth upon them, and pondereth them in his Heart. The Church is in a sort Heaven unto him, who begins to take delight in all the Divine Scriptures, and is refreshed with the Sacred and Solemn Services. For he glorifieth God with the Angels.

C H A P. XVI.

Of the Exercise of the Virtues both Interior and Exterior.

THere are three principal Virtues in the Practice of which thou art obliged to exercise thy self much in Conversation: Which are Charity, Purity and

and Humility. The first regards thy Neighbour, to whom thou art to render all Duties of Affection and Good Will; as Occasions shall present themselves. The second obliges not to say, do or think any thing that has the least Uncomeliness, or so much as to endure any thing of that kind in others, where thou art present, and hast either any Authority or Respect. The third binds to yield to every one as much as possible, that is, in things lawful, or indifferent; yet still with Discretion.

There are also three other less principal Virtues, and that regard more the Exterior of Man, as the former the Interior: Which are Modesty, Gentleness, and Discretion. The first regards our outward Comportments, our Words, our Looks, our Gestures, our Actions, our Dress, our Ornaments, with all whatever appears outwardly; which ought to bear the Mark of Virtue and Piety. The second consists in being gentle, gracious, submissive, respectful, compassionate, courteous, and humble of Heart towards every one. The third will make thee soberly consider, what thou shalt have to do, or to say, so that no Body may thereby be offended, and that no occasion be given by thee for any one to offend God.

As for the harsher Exercises of Penance and Mortification, if these be not found so very suitable to thee, let every thing at least thou dost be done for the Love of God, and through a Spirit of Piety: Which is that which gives the Worth to thy Actions, even such as are purely natural, human and indifferent.

Now this consists in three things. *First*, thou must offer up unto Almighty God in his Son's Name, the Action that thou art about to act, before thou beginnest it: Praying him, that nothing may pass thereinto which agreeth not perfectly with his Will; and that he would be pleas'd to add to it his Grace and Blessing, to the end thou may'st be able to perform

form it according as he would have it to be performed. Next thou must do the said Action, under this Consideration that it is a thing imposed of God upon thee, in that Condition wherein he has put thee; chiefly if it be a Matter of Duty, of Business or of Management of the House. In the third place, thou must refer the same to God: Thou must will and desire that it may be to his Honour, and that he may thence draw all the Glory, which it is his good Pleasure to have drawn thence.

All Exercises are to be directed to this, that the Passions be overcome, that Self-will be mortified, that the World be despised, and that God be loved: That so all Affections being pacified, Purity of Heart and Tranquillity of Mind may be possessed. Thou shalt labour a little: And thou shalt find great Rest. Short is the time of our Pilgrimage; but the Reward shall be Joy without end. Many undergo greater things for the World, than we for God. Many suffer harder things, and act with more Courage for Hell, than we for the Heavenly Kingdom.

C H A P. XVII.

*The Exercise of Holy Courage and Resolution:
With the proper Means of attaining the same.*

ACT manfully: And let thy Heart be comforted, and fortified. Be thou strong; and put thy trust in the Lord: For *he shall comfort thine Heart.* Fear not; the Lord shall be with thee always, and in every place. Seek him, and thou shalt find: Cry; cease not: If he stay, expect him yet; and if he shall delay, say unto him, "Come, Lord, and make no
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" long

“ long tarrying : O Lord, make haste to help me.
“ Help me, Gracious Jesu : And my Soul shall be
“ safe. I am thy Servant : Give me the Succour of
“ thy Grace, and it shall soon be well with me : Arise,
“ help, and deliver me, O Lord Christ, for thy
“ Name's sake.

Say also : “ Vouchsafe, Lord, to be with me ; for
“ I have a very great mind to be with thee, Lord,
“ for thy sake I began : For thy sake I renounced
“ the World : For thy sake also I left the same, even
“ to follow thee. And for thy sake I suffer these
“ Temptations. For thy sake I have undertaken
“ these Labours, and for thy sake I die every Day.
“ For the sake of thee I am esteemed as a Fool, and
“ as an useless Man. For the sake of thee, my Lord,
“ I am reprov'd and corrected : For thee I rise early,
“ and sit up late : For thee I fast and watch : For the
“ sake of thee I work, I write, [*I do this, or that :*]
“ For the sake of thee I love to be retir'd much from
“ the Noise of the World, and in Silence and Se-
“ crecy to possess my own Soul. For thy sake I do
“ and bear all these things ; for thou art worthy, and
“ art bountiful to requite me, in a time that shall
“ seem to thee good. Lord receive thy Servant, O
“ mercifully accept thy poor Servant : So shall I not
“ fear, what Flesh, or Man, can do against me.

When any Adversity or Oppression, either from without or within shall occur, then must thou have present recourse to Christ's Passion for thy Support, duly pondering his most bitter sufferings for the sake of us unworthy Wretches. And herein ought we to be comforted, that he grants us to drink out of his Cup : And that it is his Will, that we should learn in our selves to have a perfect feeling of his holy Passion, and thereby to bear as it were the *Marks* hereof in our own Bodies, to his Praise.

Little available is it to meditate upon what Christ has suffered for us, if we be not willing for his sake to suffer too, and to be made conformable to our Blessed Head. Very great are the Benefits of frequent Meditation on his Death and Passion, when there is such a Preparation and Readiness of the Heart accompanying it : For thereby we receive the Seal of our actual Incorporation with him, and being made Partakers of the like Sufferings are greatly encouraged to draw near to him in firm Faith and Assurance of his merciful Assistance and Consolation.

Wherefore with an humble Boldness come nigh to thy Lord and Saviour: And casting thy self entirely upon him, let thy Heart speak unto him after this manner, “ Lord Jesu; be thou my Refuge, and my
“ only Delight. Be thou my special Friend ; for all
“ my Friends have forsaken me. Be thou my Hope ;
“ because vain is the Hope in Man. Be thou my Joy ;
“ and the chearing of my Heart ; because all Joy that
“ is of the World is altogether empty. Be thou my
“ Leader, be thou my familiar, and my Companion,
“ in this Way wherein I Walk ; because Men will
“ soon fail, and be taken away from me. In thee is my
“ Singing ; in thee is my Comfort ; in thee is all my
“ Trust. Be thou my Health, and my Honour ; be
“ thou my Riches, and my saving Strength ; be thou
“ my Love, and pleasantness to my Palate. Grant
“ me to love thy Cross, and to imitate the Footsteps
“ of thy Passion. Write thy Wounds in my Heart,
“ and grant me cheerfully to suffer Reproaches and
“ Injuries from every side, and to be conformed to
“ thee in Life, and in Death. Let my living be
“ to lead thy Life: And to die for thee, my Dear
“ Jesu, let me account great Gain.

C H A P. XVIII.

*Of the Oblation and Union of our Exercises :
Particularly of Natural Actions.*

AS these thy Exercises, and all Works of Piety, have no manner of Merit before God, but that which they receive from Christ Jesus only : So it is absolutely necessary for thee to give them all unto him, that so he by sprinkling them with his Blood, may set upon them the Price and Value which they are to have before God. And as to whatever thou shalt suffer, either by Bodily Malady, Poverty, Reproach, or otherwise; thou must not fail to unite all this with the Pains and Sufferings which Christ did bear for thee upon the Earth ; praying him to receive that little which thou sufferest in Honour of, and Union with, that which he himself suffer'd on thy Behalf : Disposing thy self thus to accept with a good Courage that Share of his Cross which he is pleas'd to give thee, and counting it for an Honour that he vouchsafes thus to admit thee into the *Fellowship* of his Sufferings.

God's first Design was to save Man without Pain and Labour, he put him into an Earthly Paradise, amidst Delights and Abundance of all things, and would hereby have led him to Heaven ; had he been but obedient in a small Matter by denying his own Will : But this Way having not succeeded, God has graciously put him now into another, which is quite contrary to the former, even the Way of the Cross, of Pains and Sufferings, established by Christ on the Earth. Resolve then stedfastly to pass by this Way, according as all the Saints, and even the Son of God himself hath done. Remember thou how it is writ-

ten, that *both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one*: And consider in good earnest why it is that Christ *is not ashamed to call us Brethren*. Heb. xi.

For there cannot be for certain a more useful Exercise than this, of Union by Faith, of our Actions and Sufferings with those of Jesus, as the Captain of our Salvation. Wherefore it is most advisable for thee to offer up unto him all thy Actions, in Homage of those which he did living in the World, as also all thy Sufferings in Honour of his. Say hence in thy Heart: "Lord Jesu Christ, accept of me this petty
" Oblation of what I am now about to do, or to
" suffer: Let it be united, good Lord, with what
" thou didst, or with what was endured by thee in
" Flesh.

Christ, during his Life upon Earth, did sanctifie all the human Actions: Do thou accordingly in this Faith address him; take and gather the Grace, which he put into them. Art thou about to eat? Consider how he being on the Earth did also eat, and how this Action in him was *sanctified*. O let not the Grace hereof be lost as to thee! So if thou art lying down to sleep, reflect with thy self how Christ, when he was in the World did also sleep, being made subject to our Infirmities: And with this Reflection let thy Faith be quicken'd, and thereby make an Oblation to him of thy Sleep, in Honour of and Union with that which he took upon the Earth. The very same Action or Function, may be consider'd both as Natural and Divine, in divers respects: And whether thou eatest or drinkest sittest or walkest, liest down or risest up, all may be to God's Glory, and in Honour of the Humanity of Christ, wherein the Fulness of the Deity dwelt Bodily. Nay, even the very little Recreations and innocent Diversions, which sometimes may be necessary for the Health of Body and

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Refreshment of Mind, may after this Manner too be consecrated, being united with the holy Childhood of Jesus. However, very great Caution is herein required: Let therefore a deep Reverential Awe, O beloved Brother, continually rest upon thee; as thou standest in so great a Presence, and hast so glorious a Pattern given thee to copy after.

C H A P. XIX.

Some farther Directions and Encouragements.

THUS then offer thy self up to God for a sacrifice of perpetual Praise, in all whatever thou doest, or sufferest, during the whole Day, and even at Night too: That so he may vouchsafe to preserve thee in the Praise and Love of his holy Name both by Day and by Night. For this ought to be thy principal Work to *praise God always*, and to perform all our Works and Operations, whether outward or inward, little or great, bodily or spiritual, purely and with the whole Heart to his Honour, and in Union with the Exercises, Labours and Sufferings of Christ.

Accustom thy self to these Exercises, and count that Day lost wherein thou hast not made some Advancement in them. Fail not to consider hereby what thou hast gain'd or lost: That so thou mayst give Thanks or Pray. Do every thing as hath been prescribed, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, thy Head and Saviour; looking for Strength and Assistance in and through him: And present to him all Honour and Glory, Obedience and Love, in the Unity of the Father and Spirit, both now and ever. And so casting out all servile Fear, put on the Spirit of Zeal and Love, of Fortitude

tude and holy Victory. Receive Strength, put on the whole Armour of God, that thou mayst be able to stand in the Evil Day. *Be strong*, O Disciple of Christ, *and of a good Courage*; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for I am with thee, saith the Lord, that I may deliver thee. Yea, the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest, or whatsoever thou undertakest in his Name and Fear: *He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee*. Be only encouraged, and let not thine Heart faint at all; because more are they that are with us, than they that are against us. I, saith the Lord, will go before thee, and will fight for thee: I will be with thee always, and every where, so that there shall not any be able to stand before thee all the Days of thy Warfare on Earth; as thou shalt observe to do, according to the Pattern and Commandment which is given thee. Put therefore thy whole Hope in the Lord; and be not a Coward, but constant and Valiant, as to all things. Behave thy self in all Matters as a Soldier of Jesus Christ, yea, as a *good and faithful Soldier*; and let thy Heart be strengthened in the Might of thy Salvation: So shall the Enemy be made to flee.

Blessed is he whose strength is in the Lord his God; and who hath not his Comfort in Earth, but in Heaven. Blessed is he who despiseth for Christ's sake all Temporal Rest, and fighteth manfully to the end. Blessed is he who knoweth how to suffer, when he is as forsaken of God and Man. Blessed is he who goeth not out of his Rank, but as a well disciplin'd Soldier, patiently waiteth in the same, strictly herein observing the Ordinance of God. Blessed is he who, being exercised in the Battels of the Lord, both against Flesh and Blood, and against Principalities and Powers, followeth his great Leader, obeyeth his Word, submiteth intirely to his Disposall, and receiveth all things from his Hand contentedly and cheerfully.

C H A P. XX.

A Penitential Exercise.

My Grief is ever before me, Psal. xxxviii.

O My God, I have defiled and spotted my Life with many Sins ; but see my Tears, which I now pour out in thy Sight because of them. For I know that in me dwelleth no good thing ; and that as long as I bear about me this mortal Body, I am not free from falling into Sin.

I do thence what is Evil, and sin daily ; but what is yet more grievous than all, I suffer sundry Sins to pass away without a penitent Sorrow, and true Contrition. For being often intent upon, and involved in outward Affairs, and distracted with vain Curiosities ; I cannot so swiftly return back to my salutary Weeping again.

And from this, alas, it is that so powerfully there are multiplied upon me the Darkneses of my Sins ; stopping up the Springs of Grace, and cutting off from me the Streams of Divine Consolation. And is this, think you, a small Evil ? No verily. It is a great, a mighty Evil, my God ! and so much the greater and mightier, as it passeth off the sooner from the Heart, not leaving there such a real Compunction as were to be wished.

2. Lord, wilt thou (or canst thou) look on me ? Oh ! still shall I be shuffling with thee, and cheating my self ? How long art thou silent, O Lord ! Where is thy Rod ? Where is thy Goad ? and where thy Staff ? Why sufferest thou *Judgment* and *Hell* to be withdrawn from before mine Eyes ? Since were these but standing always before me, never, never durst I lead a careless Life.

If for the sake of Amendment, thou, Lord, holdest thy Peace, hereby manifestest thou indeed thy Long-suffering; but if I shall neglect this, abusing thy Patience, wilt thou not afterward severely correct, if not in this, certainly in the next World? For nothing shall pass unpunished, whether the Sin be great or small. But better is it here to bear the Punishment of our Transgressions for a while, than to put it off till we fall into the hands of the Divine Justice in another State, of which we know but little: And better to undergo a short Affliction allotted us in this present Life, than but to run the risque of being judged in another to most horrible and exquisite Torments; could these be supposed also to have an end at last, much better sure is it here, where Mourning is profitable, where Intercession is pravelent, where, comparatively, the Pains is but short which is taken, and the Labour easie; where also the Satisfaction is accepted, and the Reconciliation provided on terms no wise hard.

Spare not therefore here: Spare not thy Rod, O God; but anoint mine Eyes with such an Eye-Slave that is sharp and pungent. Neither do thou reserve my Transgressions for hereafter; lest peradventure I be delivered up to the Officers of Justice, and be cast into Prison, to abide there till the Payment of the uttermost Farthing. Far better is it now to suffer a little, than to be grievously tormented in the World to come; and to bear a few short and wholesome Stripes for a Season, than to undergo the long and bitter Pains of naked Souls in their dark Prisons.

Wherefore I must Lament and Mourn; and grievous Sorrow for my Sins layeth hold upon me. Many things have I, for which I ought to Weep: But why should I Laugh, or be Merry, there is no Cause at all. The Darknes of my Heart, and the Slipperiness of my Conscience, the Falling into Vices,

with the Falling away and Loss of Grace, are motives to me of continual Grief: They perswade me, yea, they often compel me through very Anguish to Weep and Sigh heavily.

Also when I consider the many several Temptations and IncurSIONS of Evil Spirits, which I stand subject to, what Ground can there be for Laughter? Spare me, O Lord, Spare me; my Sorrow is ever before me; and the Bread of Tears, which I eat, is by me preferred far before all the fond and foolish Mirth of the World. And if being inwardly touched with Grief of Heart, I shall *weep*, even as a Child weepeth; let this not be wonder'd at: Is it any Wonder that a Man should weep, when it is the *Time of Weeping*? O happy Hour, when Grief springs in me for my Sins! O blessed Tear, which floweth out of the Earnestness of Contrition, from a thorough Inspection of every Spot in the Soul! O joyful Birth of such a Sorrow!

3. But who is sufficient, alas, fully to discuss and examine this Abyss of Pollution in the Heart, and to reprehend its latent Corruptions, without any Glossing at all? O my God, the True Light! thou canst Enlighten all the Darknессes of my Heart, and Burn up at once all the Spots and Defilements thereof, by the *Spirit of Burning* and of *Judgment*. To thee it belongeth to give a *new* Heart, to create a *clean* Heart, and to prepare there a secret Habitation; so as it may be made the Place of thy Rest, and the Tabernacle of thy Name, O God my Lord, who art the Lover of Cleanнess, and the Guest of a good Conscience.

Yet because thou dost not willingly visit the House that is neglected; nay, dost often leave it to be mocked at for its *Beastliness*, giving it over to the treacherous Conduct of *Brutish* Affections and Manners; therefore am I solicitous, lest this also might happen to me. But do thou mercifully and graciously hasten to my
assistance

assistance, O my God ; and with thy Salvation visit me, that my Breaches may be repaired.

Wo unto him, whom thou, Lord, shalt withdraw from in Anger : But Peace unto him, whom thou shalt descend to, and with whom thou shalt abide.

As for me, Wretch that I am, behold me placed in the midst of Snares, and shackled down with the Fetters of my Sins ! And now, what Counsel is there for me, or what Remedy to be found, unless it be to lift up my contrite Eyes unto thee, if peradventure my Cry may enter into thy Holy Place ?

Nor can the Conscience, which is by Sin polluted, ever find or possess a better Medicine, or a more efficacious Remedy. Nothing more wholesome for such a Soul, than by Prayer, with most bitter Agonies, to offer up it self a Sacrifice to its God.

And how can the Importunity of Temptation, continually besetting me, be better provided against, and defeated, than by continual Prayer poured forth to thee, and by most deep Humiliation ? But who shall bestow upon me these Benefits ? Who will give unto me to Pray and Weep, as it behoveth ? Whence shall Humility come unto me, and so great a Plenteousness of Tears, as I have need of ?

Verily it can come from none but thee, O Lord, with whom there is Mercy and plentiful Redemption : With thee it is, and from thee I seek it. Therefore let not my Lord be angry at this time, if I beg of him this Favour ; nor let him cast out my Petition, which I here offer up.

C H A P. XXI.

*An Eucharistical Exercise.**Praise God in his Holiness, Psal. cl.*

O Lord, our God, how admirable is thy Name over all the Earth! and how excellent is the Memorial of it over the Children of thine Inheritance, whom thou teachest in thy Law! Thou hast raised me from the Gates of the nethermost Hell, that I might declare forth thy Praises in the Gates of the Daughter of *Sion*; and rejoice in thy Mercy, who hast saved me, before the Congregation of thy Saints.

I will praise thee, my Saviour, with my whole Heart; and will relate all the wonderful things that thou hast done for me. For thou hast undertaken my Cause, and hast judged it for me. Mine Enemy hast thou driven back; and all they that hate my Soul shall sink and fall before thee, O Lord, the Refuge of the Poor, the Helper of the Troubled, and the Judge of the whole Earth. Wherefore I will rejoice, and be overjoy'd in thee: And because thou hast raised me up, I will celebrate thy Praises with Voice and Instrument.

For I cried out to thee, O Lord my God, and thou hast healed me: Thou hast brought my Soul out of Hell, and hast saved me from being one of those who descend into the Pit, where there is no Water.

How was my Life wasted in Sorrow, and my Years spent in Sighs! My Natural Strength was weaken'd by Poyerty; and my Bones had lost their vigour. My Heart and my Bowels were in great disorder; and I was become like a broken Pitcher. But thou, Lord, hast

turned my Heaviness into Joy; 'thou hast put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladness.
 Psal. xxx. There-

Therefore will I glorifie thee henceforth, my King and my God, and will celebrate the magnificent Glory of thy Holiness; for thy Majesty is infinite. The Memory of thy abounding Sweetness will I publish; and in thy Righteousness shall my Soul rejoice.

For thou hast lifted up him that was fallen; and hast raised from the Ground him that was sorely bruised. Therefore all Love and Glory be unto thee, O merciful Lord, whose Mercies are above all thy Works. And therefore let all thy Works praise thee; and let all Flesh, with me, bless thine holy Name for ever and ever. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXII.

The Exercise of the Holy Cross.

As Sorrowful, yet always Rejoicing, 2 Cor. vi.

I Have received the Cross from thine Hand, O my dear Saviour; and as thou hast imposed it on me, I hope to bear it even to the Death, through thy Help, and in the Faith of thy Passion, and all the Benefits thereof. For most true it is, that a Christian's Life is the Cross.

Take then the Cross, O my Soul, and follow thy Jesus; so shalt thou arrive to that Life, the Blessedness of which hath no end. All good things are hidden in the Cross: But then I must remain thereupon with Perseverance, and follow even through the Death the Lord of Life. In the Cross is my Salvation: In the Cross is my Protection, and my Defence. The Cross is the Standard, under which I march to go to Heaven: Without it there is no Salvation, nor Hope of Salvation. Since I have receiv'd it, I must not quit.

quit it: It is not lawful for me to flinch back, after that I have sworn to fight under it to the Death.

In the Cross is found all Christian Perfection and Holiness: In the Cross is the Soul's Joy, and the Spirit's Strength: In this is my Life; and in this is my Way made strait: Neither can there be a nobler or a safer Way, than the Way of the Cross.

This is the Way that I have chosen: I have embraced the Cross of my Jesus. For the Love of Him I joyfully accepted it; and may the Love of my Jesus be still stronger and stronger in me, that I may bear it unto the end after him; and ever *hold fast* that which I have received.

Lo! our King is enter'd before us: He will fight for us; let us be of good cheer, and not be terrified at any thing. For it is he that leads us on: Let us be ready to die Courageously in the Battel, that we may not tarnish our Glory with a shameful Flight.

O King of Patience! dearest Lord Jesu, thou callest me, thou drawest me; and I am overcome of thy Love in such a manner, as I would not only follow Thee at distance in the Royal Way of thy Cross, but fain would even *run* after thee in the same: That so Thou may'st be Glorified; and that Patience, which thy Grace in me operates, may have its *perfect* Work. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIII.

Hail JESU: Or, The Salutation.

That at the Name of JESUS every Knee may bow.

1. **H**Ail Lord Jesu Christ, King of Angels; whom all the Heavenly Powers obey; whom *Cherubim* and *Seraphim* continually do Worship, Praise and Bless for ever and ever.

2. Hail

2. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, the true Messias, King of Saints, the Holy One, the Holy of Holies, sent from the Father's Tower in the World: Whom the Patriarchs with earnest Desires longed to see; whom the Prophets with sundry Elogies foretold to come.

3. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, King of Righteousness, the Redeemer of Mankind; whom the Apostles and Evangelists preached to the World, and taught to be the true Son of God, who for us was made Flesh, Suffer'd, and Rose again from the Dead; planting thy Holy Church throughout the World with glorious Signs and Miracles.

4. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, the most strong Defender, and most faithful Helper of the Saints; whom the glorious Martyrs, despising both the Delights of this World, and Bodily Torments, have imitated in the Agony of a Blessed Passion; and for the Testament of Faith here, constantly deliver'd themselves up to Death.

5. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, the Sovereign Sacrificer, true High Priest, and Everlasting Shepherd; whom the Priests and Levites, Doctors and Confessors have glorified in their Life, Knowledge and Virtues; and whom holy *Anchorets* and *Devotes*, travelling the strait and narrow Way, have lov'd with the utmost Devotion of Mind.

6. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, the Bridegroom of Virgins, the Comfort of Widows, the Hope of Orphans, the Refuge of the Destitute, the Refreshment of the Sad, the Eternal Salvation of Believers, and the most joyful Haven of them that come to thee: Whom an innumerable Choir of Virgins followeth, in the special Beauty of Purity, sowing the unspotted Garland of their Integrity.

7. Hail Lord Jesu Christ, Light of the World, Fountain of Life, the Soul's Paradise, the Heart's Pleasantness, the Giver of Grace, the Restorer of Innocency;

nocency ; in whom are all the hidden Treasures of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God : Whom to know is to live, and whom to serve is to reign : Whom once to have seen, is to have learnt all things : In whom the Angels earnestly long to look, and with a continual new Desire contemplating are satisfied. To thee be Praise, to thee be Glory, to thee be Thanksgiving, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIV.

An Exercise of Sanctification of Christ's Name.

By way of Soliloquy betwixt the *Soul* and her *Lord*.

I will remember thy Name from one Generation to another, Psal. xlv. 18.

Notwithstanding there is not the least Pretence of Merit in me for so high a Favour, being conscious to my self of my great and manifold Sins and Transgressions ; yet have I nevertheless great Hope in thee, because of thy most meritorious Death and Passion, O my dearest Lord JESU. Yea, I have now exceeding great Hope in thee, the Strength of my Salvation, sweetest Lord JESU ; because of all thy Sufferings and most unutterable Merits.

LORD. My Passion is thy Merit, O Man: This is to thee a sure Anchor of Hope ; hold it fast.

Soul. Strengthen me so to do, kindest Saviour : And enable me to flee unto thee at all times by Faith ; and to confide fully in thee, under every Difficulty and Temptation, who hast so tenderly invited me to
come

come unto thee, with all Freedom. O the unspeakable Riches of thy Love! O the inexhaustible Abyss of thy Merits!

Which at this time I humbly and heartily desire to recollect and consider, as I ought, for thine Honour alone: O do thou therefore, sweet Lord Jesu Christ, grant me thy Leave and Grace thus to do.

For who am I, that I should approach nigh unto thee, unless I have License from thy Majesty so to do, and Grace therewith to effect also the good Desires that are already stirr'd in me!

I am sensible, alas! even deeply sensible of mine own Unworthiness to appear in the Presence of thee my Lord, and my King, whom all the Orders of Angels do worship with profound Reverence and Abasement: Saying,

“ Who is this that cometh up from the Wilder-
“ nefs, and bringeth up thence his Sheep that were
“ lost? Who is this, O who is this, that cometh
“ again out of the Wilderneys, the Wilderneys of the
“ Earth; flowing with the Delights of Paradise, and
“ overflowing all around him? He is the King of
“ Saints: He is the King of Glory. Who is this
“ that cometh up laden with Triumphs, and bearing
“ with him the Keys of Death and Hell? He is the
“ King of Saints: He is the King of Glory.

Thou art indeed the King of Saints, O Christ, whom the Angels prostrate adore. Thou art the King of Glory, and of thy Kingdom there shall be no End, O Lord Christ; therefore let Angels and Saints together sing of the glorious Honour of thy Majesty, and declare of all thy wondrous Works for poor Mortals.

I acknowledge, O most blessed Saviour, King of Angels and Saints, that I am altogether unfit and unworthy, even so much as to think of thy Glory and Honour,

Honour, of thy Bounty and Magnificence. For why should Dust and Ashes presume so far? Still more base and vile am I than Earth and Ashes, because I am a Sinner, and prone to all manner of Wickedness.

But thou being made higher than Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens, hast the whole World under thy Feet : And art worthy to be praised and glorified for ever and ever by all the Hosts of Heaven.

Howbeit of thy Free Grace and unutterable Goodness, which surpasseth all Understanding, I am drawn strongly in Affection toward thee ; for as much as thou, Lord, art the Comfort of the Comfortless, whose Custom it is most readily to help the worst and most miserable of Sinners.

I acknowledge and confess that I am not only destitute of all Comfort, and all Good : But that I am also most unable of my self to do the least thing that can be for my own Advantage. But merciful Jesu, wouldst thou vouchsafe to consider my Baseness, and pity my Infirmary ; then should I both be assisted and comforted most plenteously in this my Tribulation, while I walk through this Valley of Tears.

Whensoever therefore I am encompassed about with Affliction and Temptation, my immediate Recourse ought presently to be unto thee. For I see well, that there is none like unto thee : Or that can help as thou helpest. Wherefore being desolate and tossed to and fro in my Mind, I will straitways, and without Fear or Trembling, flee unto my Jesus. Since there Mercy is always most ready, where Grace doth most abound.

Full art thou of Grace and Truth, O Lord Jesu Christ : Full also art thou of Mercy and Faithfulness from Generation to Generation. I acknowledge thee the Fountain of Grace : I confess thee the Foundation of Mercy.

Hail

Hail dearest Saviour, Jesu Christ, Prince of Life, King of eternal Righteousness; who art full of all Grace and Loveliness: Fain would I love thee, praise thee, and adore thee, as I ought, and as becometh thy Majesty.

But I see, that whenever I have a mind to praise thee in the most honourable manner, and duly to consider of thy most glorious Estate, I must not be too hasty herein: But had best wait to be made first purer in Heart, than I am yet; and not to proceed in such an Angelical Exercise without the Conduct of the Divine Light.

For assuredly he shall not have Glory, but rather Confusion and Reproach, who hasteth to draw near to the Holy of Holies, with an Heart that is impure, and under the bare Conduct of his own treacherous Light. And whosoever presumeth irreverently to approach unto thy Gate, O Prince of the Sanctuary, with Lauds and Thanksgivings; is worthy for such Presumption to be cast out of the Camp of thy *Israel*, and to be debarred quite from thy Favours.

Wherefore he who approacheth thereto must with all Reverence and Lowliness proceed forward: And he must add to this a good Hope, that he may find Grace to be admitted.

Humbly therefore and reverently, devoutly and confidently, I draw near unto thee, O Lord Christ, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the Sins of the World: I go to thee-ward, bowing down my Head, and stretching forth my Arms, that I may receive and embrace thee, *JESUS is my Saviour*, I repeat a thousand times. Again, ten thousand times I repeat, in Spirit the same: And could wish that all the Heavens might ring herewith ten thousand times ten thousand times, yea incessantly. Nothing more worthy, nothing more sweet, for the present, can I think on to offer.

Let the godly Lover of thy Name listen then to what I say: *JESUS is my Saviour.* Nothing more sweet, than *JESUS is my Saviour.*

The Heaven rejoices to hear it, and the Earth wonders at it, when by Faith I say, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

Satan skulks away, and Hell trembles, when my Heart breaks forth with this triumphing Shout, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

The World waxeth vile in my Eyes, and the Flesh is humbled, when my Conscience crieth out, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

Sorrow departeth, and new Joy approacheth, when my believing Mind pronounceth, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

Sluggishness vanisheth, and my Heart through Love even melteth away, when zealously I say, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

Devotion encreaseth, and Compunction springeth, when a Christian doth affectionately utter, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

Hope advanceth, and Consolation waxeth strong, and greatly is augmented, when my panting Soul but soundeth, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

The Mind is recreated, and the sickly Affection is made sound again, and established in a good State of Health, when from the ground of the Heart I say, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

For such indeed is the Sweetness of these Words, and such the Efficacy thereof, when utter'd by a Faithful Soul, as it can never be explicated by Human Expression: But still it remains more high and excellent, more profound and mysterious, than may be reached to by the Wit and Sagacity of any Creature.

Which makes me once again most humbly to bow my Knees unto thee, O Blessed Saviour, dearest Jesu: And still do I say, in Heart and Spirit, *JESUS is my Saviour.*

II. O most Gracious JESU receive my Prayer, and me with it: That so I may have somewhat that may please thee acceptably, that may embolden my Confidence towards thee, that may enkindle in me continually a greater Love of and Zeal for thee, and that may keep me evermore in constant Devotion to, and Praising of, thine Holy and Reverend Name.

Oh, that for the satisfying my ardent Desire to praise thee from the very bottom of my Heart, and to honour thee as thou deservest, both all my Members were forthwith converted into Tongues, and those Tongues into fiery Voices, that so I might find a way to glorifie thee, O Son of God, World without end!

Oh, that for all my Sins wherewith I have merited thine Indignation, and most grievously offended thy Father, and dishonoured thee, I might so thoroughly bewail and repent me for what is past, that henceforward I may take a new Course of Life to thy Glory and to the Comfort of my Soul!

Oh, that thou, seeing that my Life is so frail and subject to fall into Sin, would'st be pleased to preserve and defend me evermore from Evil, and to assist and strengthen me in all Well-doing, to the Honour of thy great Name!

O pardon thou, and forgive, dear Saviour, all my Sins either wilfully or negligently committed, by Thought, Word, or Deed; but specially the Deadness and Coldness in my Addresses to thee, and Approaches to thy Throne of Mercy.

Humbly do I throw down my self at thy Feet in Heart, earnestly with Tears imploring thy Royal Pardon and Favour: That thou wouldest vouchsafe to be good unto me, according to thy Covenant, and to give me some Sign, that I may come once to behold thy Divine Countenance in the Heavens.

O most sweet JESU, above all things to be loved, above all things to be praised; with the Father, in the Unity of the One Holy Eternal Spirit, to be adored and magnified: I salute thee, as I am bound, even from the ground of the Heart; and presenting myself to thee, I say with the Spirit, *Hail JESU my Saviour!*

Nothing it is that I have: And can I sacrifice of Nothing? *I have* Nothing; *I am* Nothing, *I can* do Nothing without thee: And nothing, Lord, do I *desire* but thee. Therefore my Soul exulteth within me and my Heart leapeth to hear *Thy Name: Hail JESU my Saviour.*

Nothing it is that I can render unto thee, for all thy Mercies which are so infinite toward me: But accept, I beseech thee, this my lowly and mean Sacrifice; and hear me, whenever I call, and say, *Hail JESU my Saviour!*

Let the Choirs of Heavenly Angels, attending about thee, sound forth thine infinite Praises on my Behalf: And let the Souls of the Righteous made perfect repeat the same. *Hail JESU full of Grace and Truth.*

In the mean while, what shall I here below do in the Praise of thy most Sacred Name? How shall I admire and adore like them? Now prostrate hence in thy Presence, O my sweet Saviour, I fall down, and with earnest Devotion being by them invited, and with the Reverence of thy most ravishing Name being all enflamed, I must, I cannot but burst out again and again, saying, *Hail JESU my Saviour, full of Grace, and full of Truth. Hail JESU, &c.*

O *JESU my Saviour!* I will therefore read of thee, I will write of thee, I will sing of thee, I will think of thee, I will speak of thee, I will work for thee; And for thee will I suffer too. In thee also will I rejoice, thee will I praise, thee will I magnifie, thee will I glorifie: *Hail JESU my Saviour.*

Write

Write my Name, O Lamb of God, in thy Book of Life : And be thou henceforward my Comfort in the Place of my Pilgrimage, that I being mindful of thy exceeding great Love, may readily run in thy Ways, and chearfully follow thee without fainting, O my sweet Advocate, my Comforter, my Provider, my Upholder, my Lord, my Friend, my only and singular Friend ; who art the Joy and Crown of all Saints, and my assured Trust, and certain Hope, that hast never yet failed me, or any one. *Hail JESU my Saviour.*

III. *LORD.* Come then, O thou faithful Soul, unto me : Offer thy self to me ; open thy whole Heart ; let the hidden Secrets thereof be unfolded ; let thy Wishes and Prayers be directed all unto me, and through me unto the Father ; and in me let all thy Counsels abide. I am thy Light, I am thy Rule, I am thy Joy : And I must be thy *All*.

Soul. I come to thee, dear Lord, because thou drawest me : The sweet Odours of thy Garments, as thou standest in the Sanctuary, and the perfume of thy Name, as a most precious Ointment poured forth ; make me forget my own Unworthiness and Baseness, and my Haltings, and to run after thee. O the irresistible Cords of thy Love, with which thou hast lead me to thy self ! I cannot rest, but where thou art : For well I see, that thou indeed must be my *All*.

Sweetest JESU, I therefore come unto thee : O JESU full of *Grace*, be thou my *All* : O JESU full of *Truth*, be thou my *All*.

Thou, Lord, art *Full*, and I am *Empty* : Grant me then that I may partake of thy *Fulness* ; and be filled with thy Grace, according to the Measure and Capacity of my Vessel, that so I may be found walking in the Truth, and not in a vain Shew only. *Hail JESU, full of Grace and Truth.*

A Sentence this is, Short in Words, but Comprehensive in Power ; a Prayer it is, Brief in the Letter, but most Extensive in the Spirit ; Little in Expression, Great in Efficacy ; Plain to the Simple, full of deep Mysteries to the Wise ; more Sweet than Honey, more Precious than the finest Gold ; continually to be Ruminated in the Heart, and with pure Lips to be frequently Repeated. *Hail JESU, my Saviour, full of Grace and Truth!*

Hereby I pray for Pardon for all my past Trespases : Hereby also I pray to be defended from future Sin and Evil : By this little short Prayer, or Salutation of Faith, I lay hold on my dear Saviour ; and he is held so fast by it, as he cannot get away without Blessing me : By this I sweetly constrain him to grant me my Petition, that his Grace may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to be given to all good Works, unto his Honour ; and that his Spirit which is the Spirit of Truth, may in all things direct and rule my Heart. Wherefore my Heart ceaseth not to cry : *Hail JESU, my Saviour, full of Grace and Truth!*

It is hereby I *Remember thy Name*, sweetest, dearest JESU : And hereby is this thy *Name sanctified* in me. O let me for this end receive of thy overflowing *Fulness*, even *Grace for Grace* ; that so I may grow continually more Devout, more Fervent, and more Attentive, in saying, *JESUS is my Saviour*, both in my Heart, and with my Mouth ; in Company, and in my Chamber alone ; in the Garden and in the Field ; and in all Places wheresoever I shall be. And now what more shall I ask of thee, *O Jesu my Saviour!*

What is Better, or more Profitable, or more Necessary for me, an unworthy Wretch, than to find Favour and Grace in thy sight, *O JESU my Saviour!*

And

And hence it is that I have earnestly desired, and still do desire, that through thy Intercession and Means I may above all things obtain the Grace of God, thy Father: And this I assuredly trust that I shall, for as much as it is undoubted, that thou hast all Power given thee both in Heaven and in Earth, *O Jesu my Saviour!*

There is no Prayer more welcome to thee, than this is: Nor any thing that I so much stand in need of, as the Grace and Mercy of God. The Grace of God is sufficient for me, of it self: For if I have but that, whatsoever else I may want, I am Rich enough: But if I want that, what, alas, will all my Endeavours avail? Surely nothing. What is all the Labour of Man, without this Divine Grace? What can I *do*, if I have it not? Again, what can I *not do*, if I am aided and assisted by it? Nothing is *possible* for me *without* it: Nothing is *impossible* for me *with* it, *O Jesu, my Saviour, full of Grace.*

Many and divers Sicknesses of Mind I suffer; but the Divine Grace is a most efficacious Medicine against all my Ails: And if once it please to come, it will not fail to bring with it Ease to them all. I stand also in need of Spiritual Wisdom and Knowledge: But the Divine Grace is a most excellent Teacher, the supreme Tutorefs of Humble Souls, and the Instruētrefs of Heavenly Discipline; and is able even of a sudden to inform me in whatever things are necessary by me to be known. For to ask for more than is necessary, or to desire to know more than is lawful, is what I am dissuaded from by this very Grace of God; admonishing and teaching me to be humbled under it, and to be contented with it.

Wherefore obtain for me, I beseech thee, dear Lord Jesu, this *Grace*, which is so Noble and so Precious, that indeed I ought neither to desire or crave any other thing than *Grace for Grace*. So will I remember thy

Name, O *Jesu*, my Saviour, from one Generation to another ; and will give Thanks to thee, O Lord my Redeemer, World without end ; saying, *Hail JESU*, my Saviour, full of Grace and Truth : Blessed be thou, O Christ, for ever and ever. Amen.

C H A P. XXV.

CHRIST the Beginning and End of the Saints Exercises.

Continued after the same manner as the former.

Full of Grace are thy Lips, Psalm xlv. 3.

1. *Soul.* **W** Herefore speak Lord ; for thou hast the Words of Eternal Life : And incline thou my Heart unto the Words of thy Mouth, even thy Words which distil down like the Dew : Yea, speak, Lord *JESU*, unto thy Servant, who heareth : Open thy Mouth, and let thy Lips drop Consolation, O *Jesu* my Saviour.

Lord. I am the Fountain of Mercy ; full of Love and of Sweetness. I am the Ladder for Sinners : I am the Hope and Pardon of the Guilty : I am the Comfort of the Sorrowful : I am the special Joy of all Saints : I am thy Saviour and Redeemer, O Beloved Soul : I am thy Advocate, and the Propitiation for thy Sins. I feed among the Lilies : I love to rest upon thy Breasts, and dwell within thy Heart. I am the Way for thee unto the Father : I am the Mirror of Life, and the Light of the Soul.

Come therefore near if thou hast a mind, and receive of my Fulness: For it is my pleasure to give thee, even according as thou hast asked, *Grace for Grace.*

Come also unto me, both Righteous and Sinners. I will sue unto the Father for you: I will intreat him to be good unto you, and to fill you with the Holy Ghost, and with Wisdom.

Let as many as love me come unto me, and fill themselves at the Breasts of my Consolation: For I am Good and Gracious to all that call upon me.

Let them also that love me not, be perswaded however to come likewise; because I am not bounded in my Love as they are; and of the Fulness of my Love let them freely partake.

I invite all, I expect all, I desire all may come unto me: No Sinner do I ever despise; but with the Angels in Heaven I rejoice exceedingly over that Sinner who repents, and so comes into the Favour of my Father. For not one Drop of my precious Blood, which I have shed for the World, is in vain.

Therefore draw near unto me, O ye Children of Men: Consider, and behold, my Zeal for you unto God my Father. Lo! I have taken his Wrath upon my self; I have born his Displeasure; and continually do I make Intercession for you to him, whom ye know that ye have most grievously offended.

Turn then, and Approach; Turn unto me: Turn (I say) again, ye Backsliding Children; for why would ye die? Draw ye near to my Throne of Grace; Repent and Believe: so may ye be confident from me of a free Pardon.

Behold, I stand between Heaven and Earth, between God and the Sinner: And that this World perish not, I obtain through my Prayers, and my Sacrifice once made for the Sins thereof.

Wherefore abuse not my Mercy and Clemency ; but beware of offending : Lest, when ye little think thereof, Indignation be poured upon you, and intolerable Vengeance.

I do forewarn you as Children, I do beseech you as Friends, that ye follow not the World, but that ye follow Me ; and that ye be Perfect, as your Heavenly Father is Perfect.

Forget not me, who have been and am, and will be always mindful of you. For I do both pity such as are in Misery, and intercede for those who call upon me ; as the most merciful Advocate of all the Faithful, and the most sure Refuge of every one that is heavy laden. Come, O come unto me, *and I will give you rest.*

Soul. O Gracious Speech, and full of all Comfort ! O Words of Celestial Sweetness, most divinely ravishing the Ear ! *Full of Grace* indeed are thy Lips, dearest Saviour Jesu ; and *Full of Truth* are they.

O Heavenly Voice, gently dropping from Heaven as the Honey Dew, softly influencing, comforting the Sinners, and making the Righteous glad ! O Celestial Musick, how sweetly, how pleasantly, dost thou resound in a despairing Conscience !

Whence, O whence is it that the King of Glory, the Saviour of Mankind, thus deigneth to talk with me, even me a poor Worm ? Yea, whence is this to me, that my Lord should even humble himself to come to me ?

Blessed art thou, O Lord Christ, and Blessed are the Words of thy Mouth. For Honey is under thy Tongue ; and the Savour of thy Speech excelleth all Sweetness : Even as Milk it floweth forth ; and the Fragrancy of it is above all Spices.

My Soul was mollified, so soon as thou spakest, O Jesu my Saviour ; and my Head even melted as Wax, when thou didst call, O Christ my Redeemer.

Behold, no sooner did thy Voice sound in mine Ears, but my Soul within did spring for Joy.

For my Spirit revived within me, and all my Entrails were filled with new Comfort; because Good and Joyful Things are told me this Day by Thee, *O Jesu my Saviour.*

I was Doleful, but now I am Cheerful, because of thy Voice: For thy Voice is pleasant in mine Ears, *O Jesu my Saviour.*

I was Grieved and Desolate, but now I am Raised from the Dust in which I sat, and am greatly Comforted: I was very Dead and Lumpish, but now I am Revived, and made Merry. For thou, Lord, hast sent thine Hand from on High, and touched me; and I was healed thereby strait of mine Infirmary. I was sick, and in Prison, but thou, O Christ, hast visited me; and now by thy Word I am made whole, and my Bonds by thy free Spirit are broken in sunder. I halted, but now I am made even to leap: And of weak, I am become strong, because thou sentest thy Word.

Scarce could I speak at all; but now methinks I can sing, and enter into thy Courts with high and magnificent Praise: since thou hast made my Heart to rejoice, and hast opened my Lips, *O Jesu my Saviour.*

Life was Weariness to me, and Pain; to Live I knew not how, and to Die I was afraid: But now I am contented to live in this World, even as thy Majesty will have me; neither do I fear to die, because I have thee, O Christ, for mine Advocate with the Father. To whose Mercy I commend my self, now, from this present Hour, and henceforward every Moment that I have here to be and subsist.

For since thy Majesty first began to speak unto the Heart of the desolate Orphan, I have been changed into a better State: As soon as thou didst open thy most Gracious Lips, I found my self presently as it were

were quite another Person, I was thereby so greatly Comforted and Established in my Mind. For which all Glory be to Thee, *O Jesu my Saviour.*

II. I was verily almost in Despair, when thy Consolation came, and lifted me most pleasantly up with such Words as these :

Lord. What is the matter, Child? and who are they that would hurt thee? Fear not, yea; Fear not at all: I will see unto thee, my Son; I, even I, will take care of thee. I live; and my Father liveth: Be not thou afraid; for in my Hands thou art safe. I do live with GOD my Father, and I sit at his Right Hand, being for thee a faithful High Priest, and an Intercessor, because of thy Sins. In Me therefore let thy Trust be fully reposed; for I am both the Giver of Life, and the Destroyer of Death: Who was, for thy sake, Incarnated of a Virgin in Time; but of my Father, Begotten before all Times: and who, when the Fulness of Time came, suffered for thy Salvation the bitter Death of the Cross; thereby, through Death, bringing Life and Immortality into the World.

Lo, whence is Hope, and whence is Consolation? Is it not from me? And by whom is Faith and Victory? Is it by any one else? No verily. Behold, I am the Hope, and the Comfort of every one that will draw nigh: And by me is Faith given, and Victory attained. Therefore let not me, nor these things be out of thy Mind: so shalt thou have no reason to fear any of Satan's Darts. Remember always, that I am *JESUS thy Saviour.*

Soul. O happy Hour, O blessed State! that my Lord and Saviour doth condescend to visit on this wile my poor tribulated Heart! O truly happy Hour, wherein he will vouchsafe thus to comfort, with his Presence, the troubled Soul!

O happy Hour, but short! O how short is it! Methinks, it is but a Moment. Whole Days would seem to me, while thou speakest, O Christ, but as one Moment. O that I might evermore hear thy so comfortable Words; for vehemently do they enflame and affect me, and I am so touched by them, to the quick, as nothing can possibly express!

They fire me, and move me, beyond all what I can utter. They search the very inmost ground of my Heart, and there doth Wisdom instruct me in secret. Thy Words are Words of Grace and Power. They are as a Fire within my Bowels: And as a Flame within thy Servant's Heart, causing it to mount strongly upwards, so are they.

Now I know, O Lord, that thou hast the Words of Eternal Life: For the *Vital Flame* I feel within me burning of an Heavenly *Vital Fire*, which proceedeth forth from my Mouth; whereby I am quicken'd in my interior Man, and raised as from Death to Life. Blessed is the Man that heareth thy Words: For they are *Spirit and Life*.

Blessed are the Ears which hear, when thou, my Lord, whisperest: And which are not distracted by the Noise of the World from attending to thy still soft Voice; in which there is both the Breath of Life, and the Spirit of Power.

Blessed is the Soul that is not wearied with waiting upon thee: For thou wilt say unto her, *I am thy Peace and thy Life*; and thou wilt make her to understand thy Ways, having led her into Solitude; and wilt instruct her silently, and teach her Songs of Salvation.

III. O Blessed Jesu, thou never ceasest to send forth the sincere Milk of Heavenly Consolation! Since by reason of the Abundance of thy Grace, thou canst not deny it to such as crave the Favour at thine Hands; thou standest always ready to bestow it accordingly

on every Soul that thirsteth after it, and that crieth unto thee in the Child-like Faith: Yea, thou art often also exhibiting this thy Grace, and shewing Royal Acts of Mercy, even to such as beg it not, and go on transgressing still in many things against thy Divine Majesty. O infinite Grace of my dearest Saviour! O Mercy and Love of my JESUS, how unutterable! Yea, how unconceivable! *Hail, JESU, full of Grace and Mercy.*

O most Magnificent JESU! how can I magnifie thee, as I ought, for the Abundance of thy Grace? When shall I thank, as I am bound, in that thy Mercies are so infinite towards me a lost forlorn Creature? O boundless Ocean of Grace, Glory be to thee.

O most Lovely JESU, who didst leave thy self an *Example* upon Earth, and keepest thy self for a *Reward* in the Heavens: Upon thee mine Eyes are fixed, and after thee do my Feet trace. Gladly do I follow thee now in Earth: But more gladly would I follow thee unto Heaven.

And how can I but follow thee, O my Treasure, ten thousand times dearer to me than all the World? For where my Treasure is, there would my Heart be also: Since to be without my JESUS is a bitter Death; but to abide with him is a most sweet Life indeed. O Treasure of my Life! dearest JESU, Treasure above all Treasures, Glory be unto thee.

O Lord Jesu Christ, without whom whosoever liveth is most miserable, and whom truly to know is great Riches, for thee I will neither fear to die, nor refuse to live. And consider therefore, I beseech thee, the Affection of mine Heart which I bear towards thee; not for my Merits, but for thy Mercies sake; who vouchsafest to be loved even of the unworthy.

For thou art the Fountain of all Goodness, the Fountain of Life, the Fountain of Grace: And never
dost

dost thou once despise the Unworthy ; for then there would be none to draw near unto thee , and thou wouldest be a King, O Christ, without Subjects.

But as thy Power is, Lord, so is thy Mercy : And as thy Wisdom is, so is thy Grace. O Mercy without Bounds, and Grace without Measure ! Who can sufficiently (or even but tolerably) utter the Omnipotent Power, the immense Greatness, and the inscrutable Wisdom of thy most merciful and gracious Love, O JESU my Saviour.

O Christ, the Rock of Saints, the Hopes of the Desolate, the Salvation of all the Ends of the Earth, how sweet is thy Grace, how pleasantly doth it sound, how sweetly doth it enter, how strongly doth it bind !

O Saviour of the World, how dost thou excel in Pity, and in Charity ! How dost thou abound ? and not *only* abound, but even superabound, in the Riches of Grace ! O the Riches of the Fulness of the Godhead dwelling Bodily and Personally in JESUS my Saviour.

O most merciful Jesu, to thee none is to be compared : Thou art above all to be loved, and above all to be revered. Thou art not only *fairer than the Children of Men* : But even the most deformed are by thee made fair ; being renewed, in the Spirit, after thy Image.

O most Amiable, most Venerable, most Incomparable One, who art the Holy of Holies, and the Saint of Saints, how wonderful is thy Majesty which is over all the Earth ! And thy Mercy, which is over all thy Works, which of the Angels can declare ?

O Son of God, by whom we are also made the Sons of God, thou alone must singularly be loved and served ; because thou alone art the good and faithful Friend. Whence is it that thou callest thy Name up-

on us: And therewith makest us Heirs of God thy Father, and Coheirs with thy self? How hath thy Grace attracted me! How have the Cords of thy Love bound me! O bind me still faster and faster to thee: And suffer me not to depart from thee for one Moment.

O Friend of all Friends, King of Heaven and Earth, Lord of Angels, Conqueror of Devils, draw me after thee: Lest I fall, and so rest under the heavy Burthen of Sin. Draw me, that I may begin zealously to run after thee, Draw me; and then not only I, but all shall run after thee, by the Savour of thine Ointments.

Pour out thy Grace, send me thy comforting Dew from above: That I may truly perceive, and rightly reflect, how thou art the sole Giver of Grace, and the open Fountain of Mercies.

IV. *Lord.* I am indeed the Spring of holy Love, and of Chast and Religious Fear; of Godly Conference, and of sweet Consolation. Therefore when ye do hear my Name, rejoice with your whole Hearts and magnifie the Goodness of your God.

In honouring me you honour the Father, even the Father in me, and me in the Father. For I am *JESUS the Son of God*: And this Name shall I have while the World endureth.

* “ But what is Jesus? Even the CHRIST, the
“ Son of the Living God; the *Saviour* of the World;
“ the King of Heaven; the Prince of the Kings of the
“ Earth; the Lord of Angels; the Redeemer of the
“ Faithful; and the Judge of the Quick and Dead.

“ And what is JESUS; The Hope of the Godly;
“ the Comfort of the Desolate; the Riches of the
“ Poor; the Glory of the Humble; the Strength of

* The Soul here Discourses with herself upon the Words of Christ.

“ the Weak ; the Way of such as wander ; the Light
 “ of the Blind ; the Staff of the Lamè ; the Stay of
 “ the Oppressed ; the Help of the Persecuted ; and
 “ the singular Refuge of all good Christians, at all
 “ Seasons.

Bless now the Son with the Father : So will the Father bless you ; even bless you through the Son. And we will both come, and dwell with you : And mine and my Father’s Kingdom shall be established in the midst of you.

Wherefore, whether ye stand or sit, pray or read, write or work ; let my Name JESUS, and the Name of GOD my Father, be often reverently in your Mouths, but continually in your Hearts.

Soul. To this do thou say *Amen*, dear Jesu : And let all People and Tribes, and Languages serve thee ; and let all Creatures bow down at thy Presence. Let the Heaven say, REIGN JESUS : Let the Earth make Answer, *Yea for ever and ever let JESUS REIGN.*

Yea, let all the Saints confess thy Glorious Name together : And let all that are consecrated and devoted to it rejoice therein for evermore ; triumphantly exulting before the Father, and thee his Lamb, who livest and reignest with him in the Unity of the same Eternal Spirit, blessed for ever. *Amen, and Amen.*

A Prayer.

I. **O** Lord JESU CHRIST, who art the Beginning and the End of all my Exercises, the First and the Last, the Alpha and the Omega, full of Grace and Truth, enlightening and instructing every Soul coming by Faith unto thee ; I humbly beseech thee to present me in thine own Name before thy Father ; cloathed with thine own Nature, which thou broughtest down from Heaven ; and quicken’d
 with

with thine own Spirit, which thou sendest forth from the Father and thy self, according to thine own infallible Promise: that so all my Steps may henceforth be guided in the Way of Peace and Salvation; and all my Exercises, private or publick, may be directed purely to thy Glory, under thy most gracious Conduct.

II. *Do thou graciously therefore prevent and assist me in whatsoever I set about; and be thou the only Rule and Standard of my Words and Actions: that so, according to thy Image, I may Day by Day be renewed in the Spirit of my Mind, and made conformable unto thee, O Jesu my Saviour; by a Death unto the Animal and Sensitive Life, and by a rising again unto a spiritual and supersensual Life, after thy Likeness. And let it be my daily Exercise to copy after thee; and by the pure Elevation, and constant Direction of my Heart towards thee, and consequently the guard of all my outward Senses, to make my Way straight in thy sight, to fix my Mind steadily upon Heavenly and Eternal Objects, and to dwell and converse with thee, as they that serve thee in thy Celestial Tabernacle; who are always following and obeying thee, wheresoever thou ledest them, O Jesu my Saviour.*

III. *For this End let me be fully instructed, I beseech thee, by thy good Spirit, in the great Duty of Self-Recollection, whether I am at Home or Abroad, in Solitude or in Company, in my Closet or at Church. And teach me the holy Art of wisely redeeming the Time, and of Godly Vigilance; with the Art of Praying continually, and of paying due Attendance in thy Courts. Wherefore let both my Bed and my Board be Holiness unto thy Name: And even my outward Acts and Gestures, as well as my inward Motions and Sensations, be entirely consecrated to thy Service and Worship, from this very Moment.*

IV. *Grant*

IV. Grant me not to be discouraged through the want of any sensible Devotion, but make me to wrestle, unto the End, in Prayer with my bodily Infirmities; and to constrain my Flesh to serve the Spirit, as becometh thy faithful Disciple and Servant, by ready and hearty Obedience to whatsoever thou enjoimest. And suffer me not to regard at any time the Horrors of the World, or temporal Lucre and Advantage, where thy Honour, and the Good of thy Church, are interested; but cause me always, in all things to consider thy good Pleasure, and revealed Will; and both in Adversity and Prosperity to put my whole Trust and Confidence in thee alone, O Jesu my Saviour.

V. Grant me, in all my Exercises of Religion, still to have regard to their true Ground, and to keep the Eye of my Mind upon the Spring and Centre, for which they do proceed, and the Relation which they bear unto thee, O my dearest Saviour. And teach me how to pass from the more outward to the more inward, and from the inferior to the superior, till at length both my Body and Soul be brought entirely under the holy Discipline of thy Wisdom. O let this thy Wisdom gently guide me in the Practice of all the Virtues, both interior and exterior; and sweetly lead me into the Exercise of all the Graces, both Divine and Humane, as in thy Person. And above all, grant me holy Courage and Perseverance in these my Spiritual Exercises, till they shall have obtained their End: And direct me how to make an Oblation and Union of them, yea of my very natural Actions too, with all that was done and suffer'd by thee for me, O Jesu my Saviour.

VI. And thus being led and encouraged by thee, after having sown in Tears, I trust that thou wilt bring me, by the Exercise of the Cross, to reap in Joy, and to praise thee in thy Holiness, compassing thy Altar with Eucharistical Hymns, where I bow my Knees before thee, and will remember thy NAME for ever and

ever; so exceeding full it is of all that is most lovely. And I beseech thee, be thou mindful of my low Estate: and vouchsafe me the most gracious Consolation of thy Presence, comforting me with the Voice of thy Salvation, and making me to feel that full of Grace are thy Words, even Words of eternal Life; wherewith thou hast raised my Soul, as from Death, that I may live before thee, and magnify thy glorious Name, with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Heavenly Host, for ever and ever. Amen.



*O dulcis Societas cum Christo! O Sien renoveris, & videbis inclitum
tuum, qui regnaturus est in te*

M. F. & G. del. & sculp.

OF THE
IMITATION
OF
Jesus Christ.

The Fourth Book.

Spiritual Entertainments:

OR, THE
SOLILOQUY of the SOUL.

INTRODUCTION.

§ I. *The Scope and Mind of the Author.*

FOR my own private Benefit and Consolation, I have heap'd together certain Devout Sentences, and the better to commit them to Memory have here compil'd them into a little Book; which I had a mind only to have kept by me as a precious Repository, and with much Affection to have laid up in my Heart. Now, for this End, I

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dispos'd

dispos'd them also as into a pleasant Orchard or Garden, that is planted with divers sorts of Trees, and beautified with great Variety of goodly Flowers: Into which I might now and then enter, and walk for my Recreation; and so might both chuse and behold at my need such Matter as my Heart should incline to most, according to my present State, for its Relief and Direction; and be stirr'd up either to read, or to meditate on, such desirable Subjects as are proper to cherish and refresh the Minds that are clouded with Lassitude, or oppress'd with Melancholy.

And that I might clearly and readily find out at all times under what Tree I was to rest; or what Flower would be for me most grateful and pleasant to be gathered, in the Reading; I took care to * distinguish the several Sections of each Chapter by the means of red Capitals, or Titles.

As to the Style which I have chosen to use, there's no reason, since the Manner and Form of the Speech herein is so very various, why it should be always one and the same. Accordingly then, sometimes as *Speaking Alone*, sometimes as *Disputing*, sometimes as *Praying*, sometimes as *Conferring*; sometimes in my *Own*, and sometimes in *Another's* Person; I have taken a great Liberty of Expression, and so accommodated the Text, as to let nothing appear in it strain'd, or the Effect of Art.

The Reader therefore is intreated not to be offended at the Writer for his introducing such a way of discoursing *with himself*. And that he would be pleas'd to pardon also the Want of Composition, and the Simplicity of Wording, from this Consideration, that not those things which are most Artificial, but

* *Rubricatis Titulis præfulgere feci.*

which are most Simple, and most Pure, are chiefly acceptable with Almighty God.

And if any where the Sense shall appear to be either not compleat, or not clear enough; as easily it may happen, wherever that shall be, I beg the Pious Candid Peruser to correct the same. Whom I assure, that if any thing improper or unfit shall be found herein, that it has rather escap'd me out of Inadvertence, than proceeded from Design.

§ II. *His Appeal.*

Moreover, for as much as Human Judgments (however *Probable* they be) are *Fallible*; I therefore most humbly address my self to Thee, Almighty GOD and Father of Lights, as thy poor Disciple begging to be taught of thee, and do hereby present to thy Majesty this SOLILOQUY: To the end * thou may'st approve what is right, and disapprove what is faulty therein, and may'st by thy holy Spirit insinuate into me, or into some *other* Servant of thine, whom thou findest faithful, what thou would'st have to be rectified, or † put into a better Light.

§ III. *A Prayer for obtaining Tranquillity of Mind, in order to understand the Scriptures.*

And also I beseech thee, Holy FATHER, that thou would'st be pleased to grant me, thy poor Servant, Time and Opportunity of taking my Abode in the most rich Pastures of the Holy Scriptures, which are my dearest Delights, and shall be, till the Day of Eternity shine forth, and the Shadow of Mortality go down.

* *Ut tu digna approbes, vitiosa improbes.*

† *Serenanda.*

And for this end withdraw, I pray thee, from me unprofitable Cares, Temporal Loves, hurtful Passions, and all other Causes whatever, that may retard my Attainment of the long'd for Rest. For the Mind that would meditate on Interior and Divine Matters, must possess it self in Liberty and Tranquillity. Which that I may be made worthy to obtain, I beseech thee graciously to pour down upon and endue me with the Blessing of thy sweet Heavenly Grace: That what is spoken or written by me, as with regard to thee, may tend to the Glory of thy Name, and with regard to my self, to the ministring of some sort of Spiritual Consolation.

The Persons supposed to speak.

THEOPHILUS, *the Servant of the Lord, being newly converted; under whom the Author expresses himself, and his own State.*

PHILOTHEA, *a certain Holy Soul, highly favour'd of God; by whom Theophilus is directed to find what he was seeking for.*

The **BELOVED**, *the Lord, consider'd as the Fountain of all Grace and Beauty; who draws both Theophilus and Philothea after him by the irresistible Cords of his Love.*

Besides whom, there are imagin'd also present the **FRIENDS or COMPANIONS** of *the Beloved*; consisting of the *Holy Angels*, and the *Spirits of the Just made Perfect*.

NOTE, *In this Divine Soliloquy, tho' the State of a Servant, and of a Spouse of Christ, is represented under two distinct Characters or Persons, for the better Expression of each; yet this doth not hinder but that all may be transacted in one and the same Soul, but according to the different Degrees and Growths of the Spiritual Regeneration.*

C H A P. I.

Of the Desire of the Soul which seeks after GOD.

In a Conference betwixt *Theophilus*, *Philothea*, and
the *Beloved*:

Philothea.

* *But it is good for me to hold me fast to GOD.*

I. **O** Sweet and short Word, embracing God, and
excluding the whole Universe! What more is
to be said? or what is to be wish'd for more? Is it
not enough, if that only be done which is now said?
And tho' other, yea very many other things might be
said, yet are not All reducible to, and comprehended
in this *One*? Say therefore again, O my Soul, with
the Prophet, *It is good for me to adhere to God*:

O my GOD, thou art my only Good: Thou *alone*
art Good, Thou *alone* art Sweet. To speak of Thee
is sweet to the Lover; to think of Thee is delicious
to the Devote: Whose Heart is not in the World;
but is hidden with thee in Heaven: That thou may'st be
unto him the only true Rest, and intimate Sweetness;
and that he may not be disquieted more with those
Things or Objects, which the fallacious Concupiscence
doth tempt Man by. My God! how is it with him
at Heart, who burns with thy Love? What manner
of Joy is his, whom nothing of the Vaulty of the
Creatures doth allure, or delight? Sings not his Voice
in the *Psalms*, out of which I have taken the beginning
of this my Speech, as after this manner: *Whom have*

I in Heaven but thee; and there is none upon Earth that I desire in comparision of thee. Or else: What have I to do with Heaven? what have I to wish for there, but only Thee? and what beside Thee should I desire on Earth? What is there, either on the Earth, or even in Heaven, for me to adhere to, but only Thee, O my God, and my Good!

Theoph. O holy Soul, who art so devout and lifted up to God! O thou ecstastick Soul! what is this, I pray, that I hear from thee? Seem they then to thee to be all but small Things, both which are in Heaven and in Earth.

II. Philoth. Allthings verily are small to me: What is there on the Earth to be desired? Or what is there for me in Heaven? Nothing that is contain'd therein will satisfie me: Surely I take all things but for Trifles.

Theoph. What is it thou seekest then? Whom desirest thou without and beyond these? And where wilt thou find Him, if not with them? Hath he a Name, or Place, or Habitation, that he may be sought out? Where is the Place of the Habitation of his Glory? Of whom I have heard thee, in a certain *Psalm*, singing:

Psal. xxxi. O God, thy House I love most dear,
Whose Glory doth excel:
I have delight, and would be near
There where thy Grace doth dwell.

Answer me, I beseech thee. For if thou canst shew him unto me, I will go along with thee, and we will seek him together; and thy God shall be my God: And it shall be well with us when he shall be found by us, and be holden fast.

III. Philoth. What is this thou seekest of me? Or why pryest thou after any thing of this Nature, as if it were with me? Thinkest thou I should tell thee,
or

or am able to tell thee things of such a kind as this? And if so, Charity might herein possibly prompt to some Discovery thereof; yet surely doth there not lie still a stronger Prohibition against the Divulging it, both from the Rareness of the Matter, and the Profoundness of the Secret? But why askest thou me? Ask of those who have *heard* and *seen*. Behold, these are they that know *who He is*, whom thou art in quest after.

But still rather go thou and ask Him, to whom nothing is unknown. For it is even He of whom our present Discourse is; and he will best of all discover himself to thee, and will demonstrate far more clearly than any other *where* it is he dwelleth. For as much as it is *He who teacheth Man Knowledge, and who giveth his Grace to the Humble.* Psal. xciv.

Draw near therefore unto Him, who revealeth himself whensoever and to whomsoever it pleaseth him: Nor is there any one without him, or beside him, who can ever open this Thing. He only hath Power to reveal to thee the Joy of those that love him, infinitely beyond all thou canst expect to learn of me.

IV. *Theoph.* And what now? What is the meaning, O holy and humble Soul, that thou speakest thus? Think not that I would sift out from thee ought, that it may be is not lawful to be known, or not possible to be spoken. Let thy Secret abide with thee; let thy Door be close shut upon thee; let the Seal of Faith remain unbroken and firm; neither let the Veil be taken from the Sanctuary. Eat holy Bread in the holy Place: Enter into the Tabernacle of thine House; ascend into the uppermost (or *innermost*) Chamber: Go into the Wine-Cellar of the Everlasting King: Or, which expresses yet somewhat more Excellent, and more Amiable still, into the very *Bride-Chamber* of thy Heavenly Bridegroom.

I acknowledge it is written: *It is not meet to take the Childrens Bread, and to give it to Dogs.*

This I know I have read. But pray see what Matt. 15. follows after; and have thou pity upon me, not flighting the Answer of her who said, *The Dogs eat of the Crumbs which fall from their Master's Table.*

Do not then hide from me the Thing I am inquiring after: Conceal it not altogether; but out of the Copiousness of Internal Sweetness, be a little Communicative, and shed forth at least one Spark of that enflamed Love, with which thou flamest; give me but the least Drop of the precious Wine, with which thou art filled; send forth from this most rich Ointment, wherewith thou art anointed, some little Breath, or Gust, of its Odour on me; that even I also may have a taste of That, the best part whereof is known and enjoyed by thee, and is so much and often thy lovely Comfort, and thy refreshing Ease.

V. Why (O why) delayest thou? Satisfie him that desireth, and open the Door to a Friend, that hath now a third time knocked. Speak, O Beloved, of thy Well-Beloved! Yet so speak, as not to pass me by. If thou art not able to speak of him *as He is*, speak of him however as thou *canst*. For who shall be able to speak of him according as he is? And who also would understand him that should so speak?

Wherefore if thou canst not speak of him as he is *in himself*, speak at least of him as he is *in thee*. If thou art ignorant what *he is* (or *doth*) as to *himself*; yet break forth, and declare what good he shall have done to *thee*. For indeed who is there that shall search him out, to know what he is in himself? Thou shalt not be able, for as much as thou hast confessed, and denied it not, saying, *Such Knowledge is too Excellent and Wonderful for me; and I* Psal. cxxxix.
cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?

Since

Since if thou art not sufficient to dive into thine own Spirit, which the Creator and Quickner of all Spirits have created ; how much less shalt thou dive into that which is uncreated ! Was it not hence therefore that thou, as one all amazed, didst cry out, *Lord, who is like unto thee ?*

Nevertheless, of all Friendship, pray tell me by some sort of *Likeness* or other, what *That* is, the *Essence* whereof thou hast not reached to. Neither oughtest thou to deny a part, to whom thou thinkest the whole should not be revealed.

VI. *Philoth.* I must needs be plain, (*said she*) thou art indeed too Curious and too Importunate with me. Thou searchest all what pertains to me through and through, and puttest in thine *Hand by the Hole* of my *Door*. I sent thee to him, and Cant. vi. again comest thou to me : Seekest thou me, or seekest thou him ? But I demand of thee, whose Spirit art thou ? Pray be quiet, and be not troublesome to me ; for he is *above me*, whom thou seekest ?

VII. *Theoph.* And I said, Shall he who seeketh God so easily then be put off ? Shall he give over his pursuit, and be quiet ? Do not so protract Words any longer ; since thou, if thou wilt, art able presently to minister Consolation. Alas ! how long keepest thou my Soul in suspense ? What sayest thou ? Or what sayest thou not ? Surely, as my Soul liveth, I will not let thee go, unless thou first bless me. And this now shall be the Blessing wherewith thou shalt bless me : Thou shalt shew *Him* unto me. Now therefore, if he hath been seen of thee, be plain and open with me : And I will lay hold on him.

VIII. Again, reply'd *Philothea* : I see thee to be in a pressing Desire, and earnest Love of thy Creator. Thou hast asked of me an hard thing : Nor do I know whether that can be done, which thou wishest for. He, whom thou seekest, knoweth well, how it is not
in

in me to tell thee this. Thy Search and Scrutiny, bearing no Denial, seemeth to be like that of the Spouse in the *Canticles*: *Shew me him faith she) whom my Soul loveth.*

Wouldst thou therefore learn of me, *who* and *what* he is, and what *good* he hath done unto me? Know, that both the one and the other of these is a Secret entrusted with me.

But still thou art not contented, I see: Neither art thou deterred by his Greatness, who encompasseth the Heavens; nor discouraged by my Littleness, who am of no Moment; yea, not so much as the least Dust of the Balance, in his sight. How is it that thou hast laid on me such a Burthen as this? Since to tell this is too painful for me, till I enter into the Sanctuary of my God, and there understand. Why is thy Will thus bent to know what is not so very lawful to be spoken.

IX. *Theoph.* And I answered, saying: And wilt thou not then? O how fain would I be instructed! For those things which most hardly may be revealed, we are generally most earnest to know; and the more importunate still are we in searching after those which are more difficultly disclos'd. Notwithstanding, once again, I pray, be not so hard towards me, as altogether to hold thy Peace. Fear not that I shall so soon betray these matters to the Enemies. No: I will keep thy Word for Friends; and even for none but the very choicest of these too. Safely may'st thou tell me in the secrecy of thy silence: Behold, we two are here alone: Nothing need divert us farther; since while thou art discoursing, neither shall I be delighted in Curiosity, nor thou in Boasting; but in him alone shall be both our delights, because he hath made us trust in him, and commit our selves to his Conduct.

And if he, of whom we speak, should himself come

in upon us, as we are speaking of him, we will give him place, and he shall be in the midst of us. And if moreover his Majesty shall vouchsafe to speak, we will be ready to listen attentively; and shall in the mean time remain silent. Nor shalt thou be obliged at all in that hour to answer my Desires. For while he speaketh, it is meet and fit all Flesh should be silent.

X. Then she again. Well: it is agreed. May but he be with us only; and may we but be carried into our *secret* Chamber. O may he be our Guide, and the Opener of our Mouth: And where we seek to go, may we be *led* of him.

This beloved, that is sought after by thee with the utmost diligence possible, thou must know is such an one, and so great as can never be expressed by any Speech; seeing he is Ineffable: He is so high, and so far exalted above all Creatures, as he must remain always Incomprehensible: His Strength and Magnificence are boundless. Whatever is said or written of him, must be believed to be altogether unworthy of him; because he is supereminently above all things.

The *Heavens* said: He passed through us, and ascended up, and hath prevailed over us. The *Earth* made answer: If the Heaven of Heavens contain him not, cease to enquire of me. The *Stars* sang: We are Darkness, and not Light, if he shine forth. The *Sea* trembled, and said: He is not in me. And the *Deep* was ignorant of him.

Hearst thou now (continued *Philothea*) what these say?

Then answered I, and said: I have heard, and was greatly troubled; because of their Voice, my Lips trembled. What therefore shall be done? What if we should enquire of him himself?

Whereupon she again: Well hast thou said; we will enquire then.

Theophilus

Theophilus and *Philothea* both: LORD, art thou the same of whom the holy Men of Old have sung; and unto whom all things, according to their seasons, are obedient?

Exod. iii.	XI. <i>The Beloved.</i> Yea verily: I AM
Deut. iv.	THAT I AM: AND BESIDES ME
Isa. xlv.	THERE IS NOT ANOTHER. I AM
Rev. i.	THE FIRST AND THE LAST;
Isa. xlii.	CREATING AND GOVERNING ALL
Acts xvii.	THINGS. AS I LIVE, SAY I, THOU
Heb. i.	LORD, I WILL BE KING FOR
John iii.	EVER, EVEN FOR * EVER AND
	EVER.

CHAP. II.

The Call of GOD Obey'd by the Soul.

Philothea and Theophilus.

Behold, I am Vile, what shall I Answer Thee?

I. *Philoth.* **W**HAT sayest thou now, O little Worm, being surrounded with so huge a Light? Behold! thy Beloved speaketh with thee, and is with thee: He is with thee, whom thou thoughtest to be with me. With me he was, when I said unto him, *It is good for me to hold me fast to God.* With thee will he be, if thou in like manner dost say: "*My Soul refuseth to be comforted, and the Day of Man I have not coveted; but in Thee,*" Psal. lxxvii. "*O LORD, will I hope: For thou, LORD,*" Jer. xvii. "*art my King, and my God. Thou shalt not be like*"

to wandering Lovers ; but as the Only One shalt thou be of the Only One ; seeking after One only Thing, and requiring One only Beloved, that can admit of no Corrivall from without.

Let therefore thy Speech be in Solitude, as betwixt him and thee alone. Farther also, if he should go away and leave thee, sit still as a Widow, patiently bearing all things : For this is his manner, thus to Go and Come, and to try his Beloved, to the end he may make her perfect in Love.

Let not his Departure trouble thee ; if thou wishest his Return, wait and wait again : He will go away for a little while, and after a little while he will come again. And all this is but the effect of Love ; which sometimes lifteth up the Soul into the Heights, and sometimes again letteth her down into the Depths.

II. *Here having Paused, she again Proceeded thus —* His Love is full of all Graces and all Lovelinesses ; no Flower is so pleasant as it, no Lily so white, no Jewel so shining Fair. He is more Gracious, more Lovely, more Pleasant, more Sweet, more Bright, more Fair, than any of these. For nothing in the Creatures is to be preferred before, or even to be compared with the Love of Him : And therefore for his sake, if thou truly lovest, thou must despise every thing.

III. *Theop.* “ I being touched inwardly with the
“ Love of Him, began hereupon so to burn in my
“ Heart, as not to be easie till I had taken my Leave
“ of all Created Beings ; for no other end, but that I
“ might be in a capacity of suing only for his most
“ Chast Embraces. And I sent forth upon this a most
“ strange and uncommon Voice, even as if I had cast
“ up Coals of Fire out of a Burning Furnace : Crying
“ out, *What have I in Heaven beside Thee ? Beside Thee*
“ *what have I desired upon Earth ? O God of my Heart !*
“ *My Portion art thou, O God, to all Eternity.*

Philoth.

Phil. Now understand concerning thy Beloved, who and what he is, and of what Quality and Grandeur, who doth incomprehensibly transcend all Beings. Yet though he be above all Words, and even above all Thoughts too, for as much as he is infinite; he is however most Amiable, most Condescending, most Familiar, and most Exorable and Easie to be intreated. So that altho' he cannot be comprehended, he may yet be loved: And while it is not possible to reach him, it may be yet possible, by a wonderful Way to embrace him.

Nay, by loving we may reach him; and by loving too we hold him fast. For Love can do all things: By this he is taken and comprehended; by this he is embraced and grasped close. By desiring we seek, by praying we knock, by patient waiting we prevail; but by loving we do all. I have said enough: And if hitherto I have not yet satisfied thee; may he himself whom thou hast sought, give thee that Satisfaction thou lackest: And may he teach thee, above and beyond all Teachers, how he will be found.

C H A P. III.

Of God's strict Judgment.

Theophilus alone. A Meditation.

* *Let my Heart rejoice, that it may fear thy Name,*
Psal. lxxxvi. 10.

Theoph. **M**Y God, thou art very lovely; but thou art also very Terrible. Let him that loveth [as thou O happy *Philothea*] Rejoice: But let him *Fear* that loveth not. None but a Madman and

* *Letetur cor meum, ut timeat nomen tuum. V. L.*

a Fool but must either Love, or Fear: For it is a dreadful thing to fall into thy hands. And who, Lord, knoweth the Power of thine Anger? For even thereafter as a Man feareth, so is thy Displeasure. And when thou entrest into Judgment, who shall stand in thy Presence? O knit therefore my Heart unto thee, my God, that I may fear thy Name.

For who may abide the Day of thy coming? Verily, as a Lion roareth, so shalt thou roar also in thine Indignation: And as the Fire blazeth on every side; so is thy Sword, which thou shalt unsheath. At the Cry of thy Voice the Inhabitants of the Earth shall be put into a wonderful Commotion: And all the Foundations of the Earth, when thou comest, shall be shaken mightily.

Who therefore shall not fear? Or, how shall any one think to escape thine hands? If a Man shall hide himself under the strongest Rock, thou shalt thunder upon this Rock, and the Strength thereof shall be cleft asunder. And if he shall abscond in the Caves, or in the Mountains; thence shall he be drawn forth: And having taken no care to have an appeased, he shall be forced to bear an incensed Deity:

II. Verily, there is not a Place where Man can be hid from thy Face. For as much as all things are naked and open before thee. Also thou piercest through all the inwards Parts of Man: And the most subtil Motions of his Thoughts thou spiest altogether: No Secret therefore is shut up from thine Eyes.

O how terrible wilt thou be to Sinners, and hardened Souls! Who glory when they have done Evil; and even triumph in the basest Deeds; and say in their Heart; Tush, the Lord seeth not; neither doth God understand. As if thou wert not to come at all; so are they puffed up with swelling and empty Words: And they turn away their Eyes, that they may not see unto the end.

But thou wilt come in an Hour which they think not of: And they shall be caught in their Iniquities, and in their own Snares shall they be ensnared. And as Thieves and Highway-men when apprehended are confounded, so shall they be confounded in like manner, when the time for it is come. Thou shalt laugh at them, who now laugh at those that are thine: And thou shalt render unto them their own Wickedness, who have had in Hatred thy Righteousness.

At present they are deaf to thy Voice: But the time cometh, when they shall cry, and none shall hear. Now they turn thy Word into a Fable; but they themselves shall then be turned into a Flame. For with an horrible Blast shall thy Word go forth; and it shall strike through the Wicked and the Faithless without Mercy.

III. What then shall the Proud, what shall the Haughty one say; who is blown up with Knowledge, and swol'n with Power? What shall he answer, when the last Trumpet shall sound? When thou, O Lord our God, shalt appear in the Brightness of thy Majesty, attended with Angels and Archangels, what Plea will such an one then put in?

Then certainly all the wicked Scoffers at thy Word shall be struck dumb: And they shall be on all sides bitterly perplexed, who did not fear to persecute, or deride, thy Servants devoted to thee.

Then shall they be confounded with a very great Confusion, who, having made a Shipwreck of their Conscience and of Probity of Life, shall have given themselves up for Slaves to the Vanities of the World and the Allurements of Flesh. Then shall they reap in Tears what is now sown in Merriment, who have let loose the Reins to Folly. Then shall there be instead of the Voice of Musick, and the Dance, Lamentation and Howling; instead of sweet Swells an horrible Stink; and Burning instead of Beauty. Then shall

shall every thing be converted to Mourning, which was Matter of immoderate Joy. Then shall they be faggotted together in Bundles for the Fire, who were here Companions in Drunkenness. Then shall all they whom Friendship did make Accomplices in the same Guilt, be Sharers also in the same Punishment : And as they were confederated in their Life to do Evil, so shall the Wheel of God's fiery Wrath not sever them, but grind them together.

IV. O Fools and Wretches! O stupid and blind Lovers of the World, what is it ye do, or what do ye pretend? How will ye flee from the Wrath of the Lord? Why make ye such haste to everlasting Torments for the sake of a little paultry Pleasure which ye are in love with? Why tremble ye not at Hell, who are so much afraid but of a little mortifying the Body? And ye that flee from the Death of the Flesh, why seek ye so little to prevent the Eternal Dying of the Soul?

For unless ye shall be converted, and mortifie in you the Deeds of the Flesh, think not that ye shall escape those dreadful Evils, and fiery Judgments: Know that GOD is just, and an Avenger of all Unrighteousness.

Horror and Trembling seize me, as I am musing on the last Day and Hour: For God will not then be intreated with Prayer; but in justice will judge every Man.

Wherefore, O Lord God, most Holy, O Lord, most Mighty, O Holy and most Merciful Saviour, deliver me not into the bitter Pains of Eternal Death: But spare me a little, giving me space and Opportunity for Repentance; that so before I depart hence, I may worthily lament my Sins, and receive the Seal of thy Pardon,

C H A P. IV.

*The Weakness and Unstayedness of the Soul after Conversion, in the Race of Christian Virtues.**Theophilus with Philothea. A Lamentation.*

* *Thine Eyes have seen that which is in me imperfect,*
Psal. cxxxix. 16. [Thou hast seen my weak side.]

Theoph. **A** H Lord God! What shall ever be done with me, since I fail and faint every Day? How shall I perfectly amend my Life? Or when will it be better with me? When shall I be in Health? And when shall I overcome all? Thinkest thou, Lord, there may be yet any hopes of my rising again, of my amending, of my proceeding, and of my safe arriving?

I have no hope at all for my self, unless thou hast it for me. There is verily no hope in me: O that it may be strong in thee! For mighty Despair is cast into me, because of mine Infirmary, which through long Vexation grows on me very much: Neither can I see any end of my Grief and of my Iniquity. And though I should say, Now will I begin, behold this is the Time, I will endeavour to my very utmost: Sin presently stands at the Door, and my Enemy is lifted up against me; and the Habit of Evil holds me captive against my Will, and will not let me go.

II. See, Lord the Dejectedness of my State, and how I am trodden down on every side. Lord! how is my Soul cast down, and trampled on: Look thou, and pity all the Calamity which I endure. Let thy

right Hand be exalted ; and deliver me from them that have shut me up : Because the Fear of them is fallen upon me. Counsel hath perished from me ; and Strength hath failed me. My Arm also is broken ; it is broken, alas ! to pieces : And Psal. xliv. My Sword will not be able to save me.

I see not unto whom, in this Extremity, I can turn aside : Neither is there any one that may receive and take care of me, who appeareth. Thou alone hast remained a Refuge for me to flee unto : But because I have offended thee, this is it that deterreth me, and driveth me back. I dare not approach for Shame ; because I have sinned against Heaven, and have provoked thy Majesty.

Lord ! I have sinned ; pardon me. All that is within me doth repent : yea repent very grievously : It paineth me exceeding much. Do unto me, Lord, whatever seemeth right in thy Sight : But be favourable, be favourable. O thou who in Judgment remembrest Mercy. Justly hast thou indeed forsaken me : Justly hast thou delivered me up to the Adversary ; for so to me it appeareth.

Yet remember, I pray, the Work of thine Hand ; and raise up again what is fallen ; since of it self it was not able to stand.

Give ear unto my Groaning ; attend to my Necessity. Let not my Labour and the Grief of my Heart be had in Forgetfulness before thee. Have regard, O most merciful Father, to my Captivity and Imprisonment, to the Oppression and Exaction which I suffer ; and bring me out of the Prison wherein I am bound fast : Have thou now regard unto me, break all my Chains, the Chains of my Corruption, and lead me forth out of this House of miserable Bondage, where the Irons (alas !) have entred into my Soul.

III. Then I farther said, if a Man shall live many Years, what shall he be yet for this amended ? And

who knows whether he shall be the better or worse? The Progress of a Man, alas! is uncertain, as also the manner of his Exit, and his Perseverance doubtful; by reason of the several Cases and Contingencies of Evil, and the Perils of Temptations.

There are many who at their first Conversion are good, and humble; but are afterward perverse and rebellious. At first they appear to be full of the Fear of the Lord and of Devotion, and to possess a contrite and silent Heart; but after this they by degrees become careless and dissolute, talkative, and very unguarded in their Lives. And these who at first did restrain their very Thoughts, do hardly take care afterward of Words, or even of Deeds. And thus by little and little every Evil, not prevented or guarded against in the Beginning, groweth still from worse to worse.

Who therefore ought not to fear, and to use Circumspection, since there are so many unhappy Accidents which befall the best and the most modest? And who also knoweth, whether he be chosen or appointed for such an end, and whether he can bear all things?

IV. *Philoth.* It behoveth verily that all be
 Act. xiv. *Tried*; and who is certain, that he may not
 1 Pet. i. be *Burnt*? Seeing that Temptation is a *Fire*.

The Duty therefore of all is to *Fear*: And so to fear, as yet to *Hope* for the best; and so to hope, as neither on one hand to presume rashly, nor on the other through vain Confidence to grow sluggish and inactive.

The Gold which is tried in the Fire shall be saved; but the Stubble shall be burnt up. See then, O Man, of what sort of Substance thou art. The
 Mal. iii. Heavenly Refiner will refine and purifie all the Children of *Levi*, even as many as serve him and wait in his Courts.

It is not always Gold which to Men glitters as Gold : Nor is it always Stubble, or reprobate Silver, which is made to bear the Flail and the Fire.

Because God looks upon the Intentions and beholds the Hearts; there working his Wonders for the most part, where by many they are thought to be lost.

V. *Theoph.* And I said: O LORD GOD! What Joy can I have in the World, if I begin but throughly to consider the Uncertainty and Infirmary of every thing under Heaven? Nevertheless, concerning thee I am certain : Because thou, LORD, art Good ; and because thy Mercy endureth for ever, and is over all them that fear thee.

For thy Goodness and thy Pity are infinitely greater than all my Iniquity. And this shall be my Comfort as long as thou shalt grant me space of Repentance.

C H A P. V.

Reflections on the State of this present Life.

Theophilus alone. A Meditation.

Declare to me the Shortness of Days, Psal. cii. 23.

AS long as I am in the World I cannot be pure ; but the Dust thereof alas ! cleaveth to my Soul. And as long as I abide here, I am a poor Pilgrim and Stranger upon Earth ; not an Inhabitant, but a Guest only. Nothing have I brought into this World, and nothing can I carry thence ; for naked came I in hither, and naked must I go out.

Job. xiv.

Heb. xi.

1 Tim. vi.

As the Shadow that is passed by, and as a Drop of Rain that is dispersed with the Wind, and as a Guest but of *one Night*, presently shall I pass hence.

This whole Life is but as a most short *Night*. Few and evil are my Days; and after a very little while they shall be ended, and shall be as if they had never been.

When a Man is dead what is there left in him behind, but Vileness and Corruption? Who is there that will take delight in, or care for, a stinking and noisome Carcass? And who will enquire after the absent Dead, who, even while he was Living, was not counted for any body.

The Remembrance of Man is short upon the Earth, and that as well with the Known as the Unknown. But the Righteous shall be had in Everlasting Remembrance: For as much as he shall be Everlastingly Conjoined with GOD, who never Dieth.

Happy therefore is he who putteth not his Trust in Man, nor is delighted overmuch with any Thing of the World, or any Appearance thereof; but who hath his Heart fixed in Heaven; because all that is here below is transitory and vain.

Go Number all those that have been from the beginning of the World until now, and tell me, I pray thee, where they are? And those that are yet alive, whom thou seest, or hearest, how long thinkest thou will they endure? Pronounce therefore concerning them all, that *every Man living is Vanity*.

O poor and wretched Life, frail and lamentable Life, which the Godly rather suffer than enjoy; rather bear with, than love! And though the Wicked do greatly love it, yet cannot they subsist long in it.

Oh! When wilt thou be at an end, and when shall all this World's Vanity cease? But the Time will come when all the Elect shall be delivered from the Bondage of Corruption; who are now Mourning and Lamenting;

Lamenting, by reason of their Absence from Christ, and from his Kingdom.

O would to God that this whole World might even wither up in my Heart, and there totally dry away! And that nothing might be dear or sweet to me, beside the Lord God, my Immortal Bridegroom! O that nothing but He might seem sweet unto my Soul!

The flitting Joy of this Life is verily a deceitful and most bitter Draught. Let them drink of it who please for me: For it shall be an hard Potion to them, whatever they now may think; and all that do so, shall certainly rue it hereafter. And the more that any one shall be intoxicated, or drunk therewith, so much sharper shall be his Torment. For all the pleasant things in this World shall, swifter than the Wind, pass away, and shall leave
Wisd. v.
Luke xvi.
to their Lovers nought but Dolours and Burnings.

II. Flee from me therefore, O deceitful Glory of the World, with all the foolish senseless Mirth of the Flesh! Flee, I say, and be gone. Thou drawest and enticest many; but in the end thou leavest them, and drownest them. Wo unto them that believe thee! Wo, wo unto them, that are by thy means drowned!

Come, and draw near, O holy *Self-denial*! and teach me the perfect Contempt, and utter Despising, of all the Poms of the World, and gawdy Vanities of the Age: And let not the wholsome Remembrance of my Pilgrimage depart from me, lest I should forget that I am but a Stranger.

What am I but Ashes and Earth? And whither must I return again, but to the Earth? O miserable Earth! O vile Dust, that I am! Who is it that shall deliver me?

O what a Wretch am I become! and what just cause have I to be sad, when I reflect on my Pilgrimage! as who am ignorant after what manner it may yet end.

If

If I live well, and persevere to the last, there can be no fear of a bad Death, I am sensible. But who is there that can boast of a Godly Life, and an Unreproachable Conscience? He that knoweth himself to be so, (if such there be) let him boast in the Lord, and have pity on me, a poor Sinner.

To Live, it pleaseth me not; because Misery presseth on every side. To Die, an Evil Conscience hath ground sufficient to fear; because it cannot answer
 Job. ix. God for one of a thousand; should he enter into Judgment. Very different from such a State of Trembling as this, is that whereof the Royal Prophet speaketh, saying, *My Heart, O Psal. cxviii. God, is ready; yea, my Heart is ready.* O that I could but in like manner say, *My Heart is ready.*

III. O Lord God of my Salvation, give me a good end of my Life; and prolong not the Days of my Mourning. Weeping I came into this Prison; nor shall I quit it without Fear.

This Life seems to me long; but this proceeds but from that Misery and Sorrow which herein comes so thick upon me. Whereas in reality it is not long: But my Days are swifter than a Post.

To one that is in Sorrow and Pain, no Time but appears long; and he accounts a Day for a Year. Tedious therefore is my Life unto me: And so much the more tedious is it, and the more grievously doth the length thereof afflict me, according as I more truly look into, and meditate on, all its several Miseries.

IV. And notwithstanding there are some Consolations, and Joyful Minutes, which come now and then betwixt; yet ought I to look about me, and to be well satisfied whether they be of God, or no. If they be of God, I do willingly accept them: But then I know not how long they will last, Nevertheless, how short

or how small soever these be, they are truly Pleasing and Palatable. Whence I would, O my God, that these might flow more freely and plenteously, if it be thy blessed Will; and that they make not such *short Hours* more, when with me; yea, such *short Minutes* rather.

Now, on the contrary, those Consolations which are not of God, are fordid and base: And soon will perish, however pleasant and luscious they may seem to look on. So, even so, passeth away this Life; wherein the Evil Things are constantly mixed with the Good, and the Good with the Evil.

As long as I am here, I am a poor Stranger. I cannot say, with respect to the Good that I receive, it is enough; because in this present Life there never is enough of any Good: For the longing Soul is not here to be satiated. But Thou, even Thou, O GOD, art the Good which I wait for: Thou art *my Good*, in whom I Believe, in whom I Trust, and for whom I go fighting all the Day long. And therefore, when thy Glory shall appear, and shall fill me, then will I confess unto thee, That now it is indeed enough, altogether enough, for me.

However, in the mean while, because this is hidden from me, Mourning and Lamentation have seized on me, and manifold Sorrow hath encompassed my Soul about. Wherefore being mindful, Lord, of thy holy Word, I frequently repeat with my self after thee, *My Soul is exceeding Sorrowful*, Matt. xxvi. *even unto Death*. Well would it be for me, if this Hour were passed away; and that Mourning and Grief did not in this manner rest upon me. But let thy Pity, Lord, I beseech thee, preserve me.

C H A P. VI.

*Of Panting after Eternal Life.**Theophilus in Solitude, Praying.**Bring my Soul out of Prison, Psal. cxlii. 7.*

MY Grief is so great, so violent, so exuberant, as it suffereth me not to be silent. And for what do I tarry here any longer? For I know not what my being here signifieth. I make but too slow a Proficiency; and instead of going forward, I wish I do not rather go backward.

How well would'st thou do for me, LORD, if soon thou would'st take me hence, that so it might not be worse with me! My Life spendeth it self in Grief: But what am I therefore mended in Manners? It flecth away, and I see no Good: I see no good to me by living here, unless, besides Sighs and Tears, there were also Works and Deeds, that might testifie the Reality of my Conversion to thee, and a Solid (not Superficial) Amendment of Life. What is all Sorrow without this?

If thou waitest for me, I am not mended by it: Yea, I rather abuse hereby thy Long-suffering. And if thou correctest me, I can hardly bear it, Job. xiii. because thou *pursuest the dry Stubble.*

Why therefore dost thou not take thy Servant away? Since for what purpose doth he cumber the Ground? Why dwelleth he with good People, and keepeth Company with them; and yet amendeth no more his Life and Manners? Why doth he unworthily, and to his own loss, fill up the Place of a better than himself? And for what end is it, that one who behaveth himself

with

with such Negligence and Lukewarmness in that State of Holiness, to which he hath been called by thee, should, through his longer abode here, be a means of hindering some Person that would be more diligent and zealous in thy Church, for promoting thy Kingdom and Glory?

And this is what I speak, as in the Ears of my God, with very great Sorrow, in the Bitterness of my Soul. Alas! why fill I the room of a Better than my self? Why do I thus cumber the Earth? .

II. But good Lord, I beseech thee, do not in thine Anger cry out against me: *Cut down the Tree, and cast it into the Fire.* Luke xiii.

I accuse my Infirmary before thee, that thou may'st forgive me, who confess my Transgression, and hide it not. It belongeth to me to Accuse; it belongeth to thee to Acquit: It is for me to Weep and Grieve heavily; it is for thee to Comfort and Raise up mercifully.

Wherefore, O Lord God, either vouchsafe to grant me greater Grace in this Life; or else take me soon out of it, that so the Breach be not made worse.

For to live long, and not to live better, doth but serve to make the Account the heavier at last. Length of Life, without true Amendment thereof, is nought but an heaping up of Judgment.

Such a Life cannot be at all pleasing to me, in which I neither see any Advancement, nor worthily bewail the Want of it; in which the Proficiency is little or none, and in which the Deficiencies pass unobserved and unlamented.

For whosoever liveth Holily and Righteously, is grieved always for whatsoever he falleth short in; and all his Failings are before him continually. He also hath evermore an ardent desire that he may grow in Virtue and Grace.

But what shall he do here, who feeleth himself every Day to fail, and go backwards, and perceiveth the Flesh strongly to rise up against the Spirit? And not only so, but who also sometimes, being worn out and overcome with the tediousness of the Conflict, or being grown into a sort of lukewarm Indifference, for want of Watchfulness, and diligent keeping of Time, doth give over Fighting, and so ceaseth longer to resist: Or who, having thrown away his Spiritual Weapons, followeth the impetuous Inclinations of his Flesh, and Drivings of his own Will.

Such an one, Ah Lord God! approacheth even to the Gates of Death; and while that he liveth in the Flesh, he incurreth the Death of his Soul.

O how much ought every one to be afraid of being led aside, and supplanted by the Enemy?

Job xiv.

Psal. li.

James iii.

There is none Safe; there is none Pure,
no not one: But there is Frailty remain-
ing in all.

III. But thou, O Lord, to whom all things are Possible, and all things Known, Raise up the Broken in Heart, and Cleanse the Unclean from all Filth, and give him a new Spirit within his Bowels: That so all Lukewarmness and Deadness may depart from him; and Spiritual Fervour may return to him again, and thy Love may abide in him stedfast and unmoveable to the very end.

He needeth but thy Help only, who is weighed down, and hindred by his own Weight. Nor can he do any thing of himself, without thy lifting Hand to raise and deliver. No ability is there in him to cast off the heavy Burthen of his Sins, unless thou from Heaven bestowest Grace, even such as may be strong enough to loose the hard Bonds of the Passions: Which I earnestly beg thee may not be refused to me, but that thou would'st graciously vouchsafe to give me this thy Grace, O Lord; that I may be always

kept

kept by it: Without which it is not possible either to lead a good Life here, or to obtain Life everlasting hereafter.

But that I now live in the Body is no Consolation to me; because Death is better to me than Life. And why so? The Reason is evident, it is namely, because by this Life I stand at a distance from that Life which is Eternal in the Heavens: The which cannot come, unless Death destroy this present Life first, and so be himself hereby destroy'd too.

Therefore my Desire looketh upward: And my Heart seeking after Eternal Rest, deeply panteth and crieth out, * *It is enough, Lord,* 1 Kings xix.
take away my Soul, which thou hast redeemed with thy Blood.

Lord, *it is enough. What shall I do here? Now, O Lord, take away my Life: Take now away my Soul into thy Mercy. Lo! I am profitable neither for my self, nor for others. For what end therefore do I live, who to my self am burthensome, and to others tedious? What shall be done with me? I know not, Lord. If thou hast provided any better thing for me, why should my Desires be put off?

I acquiesce however in thy Disposal; because it is good. Thou hast my Consent, Lord, to all whatever in thy Wisdom is ordained: But because in my self I find nothing but Evil, therefore for me to live in the World is a Burthen and Heaviness of Mind. For daily do I sin, and add Sin upon Sin: But I do not, according to the Multitude and Weight thereof, repent.

Now were I set free from this Body of Sin, and taken up into the Fellowship of thee in thy Kingdom: neither should I any more commit Sin, nor wouldest thou be offended at me in any thing more; but I should always be praising thee, my God.

* *Sufficit mihi Domine, tolle animam meam.* V. L.

But hitherto thou bearest with me, and shewest all manner of Patience. I acknowledge my Fault: I know my self guilty; and *Guilty*, Lord, I plead. For because of my Sins it cannot be lawful for me to enter into the Kingdom; for nothing that is unclean, or unholy, shall find Admission into it.

Ah! But when shall I be without Sin? When shall I be cleansed fully; so that I need not fear a Repulse; but upon good grounds be confident of a ready Admission? When shall Fear cease, and I be full of Gladness at the Prospect of my Dismission hence? Surely, if I do not proceed on with greater Fervour, than hitherto I have done; if I be not more solicitous and watchful, than to this very Day I have yet shewed my self; I am afraid my Hope will be small enough.

But thou, O Lord, who willest not any to perish, but that all may be saved, vouchsafe to bestow on me a greater Portion of thy Grace, for the effectual Amendment of my Life: And for Dryness give me the Spirit of internal Fatness and Sweetness; that in thy Salvation I may rejoice, having a good Hope of the Heavenly Things, and those hidden Joys and Goods which thou, Lord, hast treasured up for as many as seek thee, and breath after thee. Wherefore never let my Heart here be any more joyful after the Flesh: But, if it rejoyce at all, let it be joyful according to the Spirit.

Let the Sense of my Mortality quash all vain Desires and Joys. Let no Creature hold me; let no Care seize me; but let thy wish'd for Presence, draw me, and comfort me.

Blessed is he who waiteth for thee, O Lord: But *more Blessed* is he who is already departed out of this wicked World; for he shall not feel, or fear, any more of Trouble, being delivered from all Evil.

C H A P. VII.

*The Affectionate Wishes of the Christian Traveller
for a Blessed Departure.**Theophilus* alone: Wrestling in a great Agony of Soul.*Thou art my Hope, LORD, even from my Youth.*
Psal. lxxi. 4.

IN this Hope I have recourse unto thee, when the last Hour, and Time of my Dissolution shall come. O that I were but well prepared for it; that I might die in thy Favour, under the Conduct of Grace! O that I had but put off once this Bodily Weight, were but once freed from this Load of Flesh, and once got over by an happy Passage this Sea of Mortality and Misery; what Perils, and what Fears, should I then be rid of?

Happy is he, whom thou hast chosen and taken up; who, having put off the Body, is passed out of this World unto the FATHER; from Banishment to a Kingdom; from a Prison to a Palace; from Darkness to Light; from Death to Life; from Perils to Security; from Labour to Rest; and from all kind of Miseries to perpetual Blessedness.

Matt. v.
---xxv.
Phil. i.
Rev. xxi.
---xxii.

Happy is that Soul, which is already entred into the Joy of its Master; which hath finished its Warfare, and obtained the Crown; rejoicing in thee the Lord its God, and its everlasting Rock.

But wo is me, that I am constrained to dwell with *Mesech*; and that my Soul is thus long forced to dwell, and be a Pilgrim, in the Land of the Shadow of Death! Ah! how is my Pilgrimage here lengthened out even unto this Hour? How graciously and mercifully

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wouldest

wouldest thou deal with me, sooner to have called me hence, and to have suffered me to come to thee: That where thou art, there also I might be.

Ah! Hadst thou taken me sooner out of this World, while yet I was unacquainted with its Defilements, and while I was afraid of sinning even in small things; how much Good wouldest thou have done to me herein? How happy had I then been? But now by living longer, I have wandred farther from thee, and have offended in many, very many things: And the longer here I continue, the more still I do wander; for I am ever straying, of my self, from thy most righteous Paths, O Lord, most Holy!

II. Wo is me, what have I done! I have followed fleshly Passions; I have attracted Vanities; I have deserted the Virtues; I have not kept Innocency. I have added Evil to Evil: And, alas! I have to my Grief experimented what I have sometime read, *Wo unto the Wicked, it (is, or) shall be ill with him.* Isa. iii. Why so? *For the Reward of his Hands shall be given him.*

Wo is me, if according to the Evil which I have heaped up, thou, Lord, shouldest deal with me, and not blot out Transgressions and Iniquities. With much ado I returned back at length to thee; I began late; and having begun, in the return I hastened not as I ought; having made some Progress, I dallied still, and was no ways warm in my Intentions of Proceeding; I grew not in Fervour, and Spiritual Diligence; yea what is worse, I have even grown cold as to that Divine Warmth which I felt in the beginning to burn within me, and have forgotten in a great Measure the Endearments of my *First Love*.

And hence I have been often afraid of dying, because my Conscience implending me still told me, I had not lived as I ought to have done.

Notwithstanding by reason of the Perils of Temptation, unto which I am subject, and lest the last Er-

rour should be worse than the first, I have frequently wished even for Death; and into these Words have I burst, saying: "O that now God in Mercy would take me out of this World, that I might sin no more upon Earth! O that I had been even now already dead, while yet the Light of his Grace did shine upon me, that I might not be affected with so great Evils, as I daily here meet with in this Land of the Curse! O that speedily he would vouchsafe to redeem me from the Earth! Ah me! Where am I? O that my God, I say, would but take me hence in Season right early, and put an end to my Labours! In what an happy State should I then be! O that he had but taken me away e'er this; and cut short this toilsome dangerous State; how well then had it been for me! But in thy Will, O Lord, are all things: And all thy Dealings with me are exceeding righteous and good. Wherefore I *will* also, that all things be even as thou *wilt*.

Thus many a time have I, in Consideration of the dangerous Temptations I am here expos'd to, and that my Sins might not encrease more and more, groaned in Spirit for Deliverance; yet bowing still my Will to God's Will, as is most meet. Wherefore my Heart melteth with very fervent Heat: And my Bowels, that are greatly moved, say, "O that thou wouldest make an end, Lord, of my Labours! Yet it behoveth that all things be according as thou wilt. If thou mind therefore to do what I request, it shall forthwith be accomplish'd accordingly: But if otherwise, thy Will be done, most Righteous Father.

So I utter forth the Weight of my Heart, not as to one who is ignorant thereof; but that I may find some comfort at least hereby to my Spirit. Neither do I go at this time to insinuate my Desire, and the Calamity which I suffer, unto thee, Lord, as if thou

knewest it not: But only that I might, by such a sort of Discourse, cause some Refreshment to my Soul. O Lord, thou knowest all that is to come, and all that is past: Thou hast tried me, and hast known me. Afar off hast thou discovered my Thoughts: And all my most hidden Steps hast thou traced.

Therefore also hath Terrour again seized me; and now I flee, as before, from the *Shadow* of Death. For, alas! I am not yet ready, thou knowest, as I ought to be: Lord! I am not ready; and when I shall be made ready for thee, I know not. This only I know, that I am not yet well prepared; so that my Conscience is still very much afraid. Afraid indeed I am exceedingly, O Lord most holy! And what wonder is it, if I a wretched Sinner do fear, when even many of the Holy Fathers, and precious Saints of thine, feared not a little; since thy Judgments are not as our Judgments, neither thy Thoughts as our Thoughts.

But how shall I be prepared? It were well indeed that I could better prepare my self against that Day, which I am ignorant of; not knowing whether it may be even this Day, or to Morrow. But, ah! how shall this be? Lord, how shall I prepare my self?

Well, thy Grace assisting me, I am resolved to do all what is possible for me henceforth, that I may be in some Preparation, when that Day cometh; that it overtake me not unawares. I will most firmly renew my *Purpose*, which I made in the beginning to imitate, and follow thee, my dear Saviour; I will, to my Power, confirm all those holy Resolutions thou hast at any time since inspired into me, and leave thee to set thy Seal to them; I will bewail and abhor my Unworthiness and Ingratitude, in having so greatly and often violated the most sacred Engagements; yea in the Bitterness of my Soul will I lament and deplore all those impure Loves that I have been led away with, and seduced from thee the *Infinite Good*: I will utterly re-

nounce all things that may be any ways displeasing to thee, to whom I long inseparably to be united; I will offer up my self wholly and entirely a Sacrifice to thee, and so without more ado commit all to thy Mercy; commending my Spirit, with all that I have, into thy righteous and loving Hands for evermore.

O Lord my God, in thy Mercy all my Works have their Acceptance; by this they stand, but without it they fall; for it is thy Mercy alone that makes our Merit. Alas! without thy infinite Pity and Compassion be present with me, what are Eph. i. all my highest Merits, and most righteous Deeds, but mere Dross and Dung, Rags and Filth? Mercy, Mercy, dear Lord! *Mercy*, my Soul instantly cries, and repeats and knocks; abhorring her self, that she may glorifie thee, and exalt the Triumphs of thy Mercy: That Mercy *which endureth for ever*. And this is my Hope, and my Trust.

These are the Meditations of my Heart (said *Theophilus*, here addressing himself to *Philothea*) who am covered over with Sin and Iniquity: But how it is with such as have led an uncorrupted Life, I would fain also know. There are some who run the Ways of God's Commandments, for which they have been early set at Liberty: Perhaps it may be otherwise with them, than with me. How is it therefore with the good and undefiled Conscience? What saith the chaste and devout Soul?

C H A P. VIII.

*More Breathings of a Devout Soul for Deliverance
out of the Body.*

Philothea pursues what *Theophilus* had desired: And expresses her earnest Pantings to be set free.

The Spirit and the Bride say COME, Rev. xxii. 17.

Philoth. **C**OME, Lord JESU! Come, and tarry not; come, dear Lord, come away; come, O come, and break my Bands asunder; come, and release me from the Chains of Sin and Corruption; O bring me out of this House of Bondage, out of this Lake of Misery, and out of this Dunghil of all Filth and Nastiness. Come to me, O my Deliverer, and bring my Soul out of Prison; for I faint after thee. How long must I dwell yet in *Egypt*, and have my Habitation in these Tents of *Kedar*? Why comest thou not yet? Come, come away my Beloved. Come to me, skipping over the Mountains, O thou whom my Heart panteth for: And break down all Partition Walls that would divide thee and me. Come quickly, Lord JESU!

Ah! do not longer leave me in this World. Let it suffice, that hitherto I have laboured and fought; that so long time I have been an Exile here, as banished from my Heavenly Country, and thy glorious Presence; that I have been a Pilgrim and a Stranger, on the Earth, as all my Fathers were with continued Toil and Trouble, passing through this Valley of Tears; that, lastly, I have not in all this while been able so to improve my self, notwithstanding the Abundance of thy Grace confer'd, as to be fit for the enjoying

enjoying thee, by Contemplation of thee Face to Face. Let it content thee, Lord, that hitherto I have striven; that I have been so long an Exile; that I can never deserve to enjoy thee.

Now at length then vouchsafe, dear Lord, to grant me the Fruition of that Joy, which thou hast laid up for me: A Joy unbounded, and uninterrupted; which cloyeth never, but is always new and fresh. O the Streams of Eternal Delight, and Rivers of unfading Pleasure, which in those blest Mansions above are ever flowing forth from thee! How do they overflow every Vessel there: And evermore surprizingly delight, charm, and ravish! O when, when shall I thus come to behold thee? Is it not long enough yet that thou hast tarried: And that I also have tarried waiting for thee, my Lord? O! shew me thy Face: That Face which Angels always behold, and always adore. O let thy Voice be heard in my Ears: That Voice which they without Intermission hear; and hearing always proclaim, and echo forth with sweetest Melody.

II. Come, Lord JESU: Yea, come, and take me away out of a strange Land; call me home to my own Country in the Heavens; who am here (alas!) but as an Abject and a Vagabond; the disinherited do thou bring back to his Native Inheritance: The fallen do thou raise up to his former Degree again. Come, gracious Redeemer, restore me to my Primæval State, from which I so foolishly fell: And make me Partaker of thy everlasting Glory. It is time that I return to thee: It is time that thou commend my Body to the Earth, out of which it was taken. No great matter is it, where this be put, or how it be treated: So the Spirit be but safe, and lodged with thee. Well shall it be with my Spirit, which I commend into thy Hands: And my Flesh also shall rest in Hope, which thou shalt raise up again at the last Day. For wheresoever may it be

I Cor. xv.

deposited, or hid, it cannot be removed from, or unknown to thee.

O receive me up from among Men, and join me to the Society of thy Saints above: That I with them, and they with me, may continually laud and magnifie thy most glorious Name. I am weary, exceeding weary of this Temporal Life: Nought but the Day of Eternal Brightness can delight me. Let that Day, I beseech thee, now dawn upon me: And bring me forth out of this Land of thick Darkness, and of the Shadows of Mortality; yea, make hast to bring me forth, O my Lord, and my Saviour.

III. Let not the old Serpent stand in my way at my going forth hence out of *Egypt*; let not the Enemy bark against me in the Gate; let not this dismal Image at all terrifie me; neither let the Horrour of Death put me into Confusion. But let thy Holy Angels faithfully assist and stand by me, powerfully help, valiantly protect, gently and tenderly receive, and triumphantly conduct me to the Heavenly Paradise. Let also those blessed Souls that are there arrived before, even the several Orders of the Just made perfect, be for the same end commanded by thee to entertain and welcome me immediately upon my Departure out of this House of my Captivity. But above all, and in the first Place, do thou dearest, kindest, sweetest *JESU*! O Lord most gracious, O Lord most tender, O Lord most merciful! Then give me the Joy of thy Countenance, and reprobate me not from among the number of thy blessed Saints, but let me be admitted by thee into that all-desirable Society. Therefore do thou call to Remembrance, and reflect again and again, O Son of God, that thou hast redeemed me from the Enemy through thy most precious Blood; and that I am so thy Purchase, as nothing can be more. Verily I am thy Purchase, O blessed Lord, Lamb of God, Saviour of the World: I am thine; therefore take me, seize

seize me, possess me for thine own. O fit and prepare me for thy dear Presence, that according to the Preparation of the Sanctuary I may be clean and holy, and without Spot or Wrinkle presented by thee to thy Father and my Father. O Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World, receive what I humbly commend into thy hands; beseeching thee, it may be precious in thy Sight. In thee have I put my Trust; be thou my strong Hold, whereunto I may in that Hour resort: And a Tower of Defence against the Face of the Enemy be thou unto me; for my sure Confidence is in thee. Go not far from me, O God: My God, haste thee to help me; and when I pass hence out of this Earthly Prison, cover thou my Enemies that war against my Soul with Shame and Confusion. So shall they gnash their Teeth; but I will go forth in the Strength of thee, O Lord my God. For I both know and feel, *that there is none other Name under Heaven given to Men, in whom and through whom* there is to be obtained Health and Salvation, but thine only, my Dearest Jesu: Therefore will I make mention of *thy Righteousness* only, in the great Congregation of thy Saints; and before the Church of the First-born will I declare what great things they are that thou hast done for my Soul, when I am set at liberty, and joined to them in those blissful Mansions. Oh! when shall this be? Come my dear Redeemer: And deliver my panting Soul out of Prison; for I long for nought but thee; and to be with thee, my Jesu. O receive me into Glory in thy Mercy, and in thy Goodness; for as much as I have earnestly desired to keep this *Passover with thee*.

IV. Welcome happy Day, which I have so panted and thirsted after, welcome most happy Day which shall put an end to all the Miseries of Mortality! O blest Hour of that blessed *Passage*, which I have so long desired, and have had always before mine Eyes; Welcome;

thrice

thrice Welcome art thou ! What am I now the worse for the Troubles and Pressures I have endured in this World ? Or what hurt have I received from the Contempt, and Labour, and Humiliation, which for thy Name's sake, O Lord, I have passed through ? Thou hast been to me my very Life : And now to die is an Advantage ; and to be with thee, in thy Kingdom, will be far better than to abide in the Flesh. To thee be Praise and Glory, who art the Life of the Living, the Hope of the Dying, the Salvation and the Rest of all that fully come to Thee.

Phil. i.
John xi.
Psal. xvii.

C H A P. IX.

The Mystical Death.

Theophilus and Philothea, declaring how the World being Dead to a Christian, his Life is hid in Christ.

Turn away mine Eyes, that they behold not Vanity, Ps. cxix.

Theoph. **O** LORD JESU, who art the true Life, the Life which cannot die ! Grant unto me so to know and feel thee to be in me the Power and Energy of an endless Life, as I may be content out of Love to be bruised for thee ; nor only to be bruised and wounded for thee, but out of the same Love even to die ; that the Flesh may not have Dominion over me. O give me Grace, that through Love of Thee I may be melted down, and so die thoroughly to the Worldly Life. Since I am not yet, alas ! *dead* to the World ; but hitherto the old *Adam* still *lives* in me ; stirring up within me continually many Dissentions and

and Quarrellings, with Lustings after sundry Evil and Noxious Things; causing me both bitter Nights and tiresome Days. O when shall it be, that with Confidence I may say, *I am Crucified to the World*; and, *I account my self as one Dead upon the Earth*? For he that is dead, cares not for the Praises of Men, because he is Dead: Neither cares he for the Reproaches of the malicious Tongue, because he is dead. The Dead observe not any thing.

Philoth. He that is Dead in the Flesh, Speaks not, Smells not, Tastes not, neither exercises himself about any Work. Is it not so?

Theoph. That is undoubted. And hereby shall I know whether I am dead to the World or no. If I have any delight to speak of the World, if I have longer any Relish for it, if I am attracted with the Vapours of it, if I trouble my self about any of its Concerns; I have certainly good reason to question, whether I am so dead thereto, as possibly I might at first imagine to my self.

Philoth. For what are all the Poms and Vanities of the World to one that is dead? Surely they are nothing. He neither Hears what passes in it, nor Sees what is admir'd for Curious and Beautiful. Nor are any of those things, which are capable of alluring to the Love of the Earth, able to reach his Senses, or move him in the least.

Theoph. So then it must be with me, I see, if I be truly Crucified and Dead to the World.

Philoth. He who is Dead to the World, is not in the World, but in God, unto whom he lives; for this is a most sure and faithful Testimony, that such an one is in Christ, and Christ in him. See therefore that thou be not in the World, by the World's being in thee: But be out of the World, even while thou art in it; by being Senseless to it, and Alive to thy God only. He that is thus Dead, is Spiritually Risen with

with Christ; for he can seek only those things which are above, where Christ is. This is the hidden and mystical Death, the only Way to true Life. Of which the blessed Apostle St. Paul accordingly bears this Record, saying to the Primitive Saints under Col. iii. his Charge: *Ye are Dead, and your Life is hid with Christ in God.*

He that is thus Dead, so Speaks, so Thinks, so Sees those Objects which are Without, as if they were not at all; because that which is *seen* is Temporal and Vain; but that only which is *not seen* is Eternal and True. The things which we here see are *Shadows*; those which are above, and here unseen, are the *Substances*. Hither therefore he looks, this is that which sets him all in a Flame; hither his Affections move with the greatest Swiftneſs and Alacrity: For this is all his Labour; for this is all his Toil, and Sweat, and Suffering; all tend to this; all his Desires center here; this is his *Treasure*, and herein is his *Heart*. This, and nought but this, he wills; This he loves, This he pursues; This only he has a relish for: Nothing can he now savour in the least but this Internal Good; which is hidden, even that chief and everlasting Good; in Thinking and Reflecting on which he can never have enough, in as much as it is to him exceedingly Dear, and Sweet, and Delightful, and most Unexpressible; as infinitely Surpassing, not only all the Power of Words, but even of Thoughts too.

He that is Dead in this manner, is consequently set at a vast distance from all things Temporal, his Affections being wholly taken up with those that are Eternal, by the subduing of the sensible Appetite, in mortifying all its Motions and Desires, which are ever warring against the Soul. For the Life of Sense, or Sensuality, seeks the things that are Without, covets those that are Delightful, considers those that are Present,

Present, neglects those that are Future, and always shuns wheresoever it can those that are (or seem to be) Bitter and Harsh ; which yet are very often Medicinal and Improving to the Spirit.

Whence it permits not the Spirit to act in Silence and Rest ; but brings to, and sets before it divers Phantasies, which are scarce fit to be mentioned, and are really to be accounted of as nothing, as indeed they are in themselves. But whoever hath the Grace of *Spiritual Fortitude*, can quickly command and subjugate the Insolent Motions of the *Flesh*, singing in the Word of Divine Power, *The Lord is on my side : I will not fear what Flesh can do* Psal. cxviii. unto me.

Now therefore, however the *Sensitive* Life may raise up a War in such a Soul, and the Voice of *Flesh* may mutter and murmur ; yet because the Force of Divine Love, which inwardly comforts and strengthens, is greater than that of the *Flesh*, which disheartens and resists, she is generally pretty secure from all its Attacks. Nor need she at all be led aside, if she but gives her self up wholly to the Conduct of this Love of God which is shed abroad in her.

By Virtue whereof the Divine Lover is at some Seasons so sweetly, so powerfully, and so ardently drawn, snatch'd away, and transported to God, and so held in God, (being taken up in Contemplation of his infinite Loveliness, and of the unsearchable Abyss of his endless Mercies and Compassions) as to be stripp'd in a manner for the time of all outward Sensation : So that he is as one perfectly Lifeless to all those things that are about him, and even touch him. For his Eye is turned away from this Region of Vanity, so that he beholds nothing that is done here ; and it is turned to the World of Eternal Truth, where it is fixed. He sees not, he hears not, he perceives not, he feels not the Objects (Ah vain and deceitful Objects !)

jects ! that surround him, and make such a noise and bustle in the World : For as much as he is not here, but elsewhere ; not below, but above ; even with God, and in God. Who ceases not to move him from what is Exterior and Inferior, to that which is Interior and Superior ; who most sweetly attracts him Inwards, by the soft and gentle Methods of his Grace ; lifts him up, by the strong Cords of his Love ; and carries him away hence, as it were in a fiery Chariot : That so he may even anticipate Heaven, and receive a foretaste of the Powers and Joys of the World to come ; sometime enjoying his God after this manner , before he shall here put off the Mortal Flesh, in the happy and blessed Communion of his Love ; to the satisfying the long and vehement Desire of his Heart, and the holy Ardours of his inflamed Affection, constantly moving Heavenward.

This Divine Lover, Dead to the World, but Alive to God, is not found any where abroad, or without : For his *Paramour* hath taken him away. And he hath a Place prepared for him in the Wilderness, even a *Place prepared of God*, that he may be hid from the World : And here also hath he a Table spread, a Table at which Angels minister ; where he who took him away sits by him, and feeds him with the hidden Manna of his precious Favours and Consolations. Here, being separated from the vain Noise and Crowd of Worldly Encumberances, he hears alone his Words, even the Words of his Beloved ; and rejoiceth with exceeding Joy, because it is the Voice of the Bridegroom in nothing suspected to him.

Neither doth he presently pour forth his Vial into the Sun, to draw in Vanity : But he hides the Treasure which he has found, and closes it fast with a *Seal* ; that so the Foot of Pride may not enter into it, and all its Virtue be lost. For he remembers who it is that said, *Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart* ; and whose
Saying

Saying it is even until now. This *sealed* Love betwixt holy Lovers, is truly strong as Death, and inflexible as the Grave; and whose Coals are *Coals of Fire*, sending forth a *most vehement Flame*, which cannot rest before they shall have burnt up all the *Hay* and *Stubble* that stand in their way.

Nothing therefore can be of greater Use to the loving Soul, than to *seal* the Heart, and to *keep* it; lest the Beloved peradventure should pass by, and flee from it, because he findeth it unsealed and unkept: Who delighteth much to visit and court that Heart which is pure and humble, recollected and silent.

These things now she compareth and discourseth in secret in her self; and admireth at so great a Good, surpassing all Sense and Understanding, as well as every *good Gift*. Again she admireth; and standeth admiring and gazing, in much suspense and surprise.

For, because the Soul *wist not what it was* at first, when she was thus visited, it appearing to her so exceeding strange, she was not able to give over her Wonderment for a long while. So still being taken up with Admiration, she diligently asketh, as did outward *Israel* heretofore, *What is this?* And she vehemently hereupon rejoiceth to find, that *This is the Bread which the LORD hath given her to eat*, and the *MANNA* which descendeth down from Heaven, and which is in Heaven.

Now he who administreth the true Bread from Heaven, giveth also at the same time to the Soul that tasteth thereof, a good understanding, and a discerning Palate, that she may know how that *every good Gift, and every perfect Gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights*.

“ This, This (*says she presently*) is from God undoubtedly. Verily, this Word is of the Lord, and

“ of no other. Nothing comes to me without him :
“ From him are all things that I possess. And He is
“ All, and is in All, and is above all : Blessed for ever,
“ World without end.

Again, after this the Soul looketh, and wondereth, and complaineth, whence and how it is that she taketh so indifferent a Care about so great a Good as this ; with which nevertheless her whole Welfare is entirely wrapt up, and which doth so abundantly at once both Delight and Profit ; and why it is she inclineth not her Heart more frequently to hear and see that Object, than which nothing can be sweeter or happier in the Enjoyment.

And then she bursts out of a sudden, as not longer able to contain her self, after this manner : “ But
“ O that for the future, at least, a proportionable
“ Care might be taken ! O that it be never so again !
“ For this is the Thing that mainly, yea that sovereignly delights me : And this shall still more and
“ more go on to delight, charm, and ravish, if I
“ do but apply my self to wait thereupon. Let
“ my Beloved come into my Heart, that I may eat
“ of the Fruit of his Apples. Let him turn aside
“ unto me, and shew himself unto me ; that I may
“ shew my self unto him. He, he only is my Good,
“ and my Joy. O my Good ! O my Joy ! O Good
“ most High ! O Joy unspeakable and full of Glory !

Then presently she begins to pant and long, and vehemently to be in Love with this *Good*, wherein is all and every Good ; and with this *Joy*, wherein is all and every Joy ; this *One*, wherein are All Things, both great and small, high and low ; yet nothing of all this in any Creaturely Form, but Supereminently in those pure and simple Ideas, which have their Subsistence in the Divine Intellect, the undefiled and unformed Mirror of all Truth : This only One, the Beginning and the End of all created Goods and Joys.

And

And hereupon she is sometimes mighty desirous and earnest to be all over replenished out of this Good, to be overflowed with this most sweet delicious Joy, and to be taken even into this original Source and Fountain of all Lovelinesses, this hidden Root of all pleasing and delightful Forms: Yea, She covets to be swallowed up, and engulphed as it were therein wholly, to be in a manner devoured and consumed thereby, so thinking to satisfy her *unsatiable* Love; to the end that nothing of her self may remain, if possible; but that all that remains may be of him, and she by consequent may be all and entirely his; whose is the Fire and the Torrent of Love, and whose is all this marvellous Operation: That so through the Vehemence of her ardent Breathings she may be caught away as into him, and may be made together with him *One Spirit*. And this is her Attainment of the Mystical Death, in the very highest Degree of it, by her pressing into the Unity of Life, in the *Life of God*; though it be a Life that is indeed wholly hid from the World.

But the Soul, when she is arrived thus far, as dead both to the World and to her self, and living not her own, but the Life of Christ in the World, by being brought into this *Oneness* with the Spirit of God and Christ, is not in the least exalted and elevated hereby; but is rather so much the more depressed and humbled in her Thoughts. She makes no manner of account of her self; nor despises the others (how mean soever:) She censures not any for not being as she is: She judges not any, but her self only; for as much as it is not her own which she hath, but the mere free Gift of God: So that there is not the least ground for her to think highly of her self, or to extol her own Merit in this Case, as she very well knows; seeing that all is thus continually derived to her from his Influx, and that she is after such a manner quickned
S
and

and comforted by him. This is the Course of her Behaviour. For she seeks no Praise, nor minds the Favour of any: But seeks the Beloved, whose Praise and Favour she only thirsts after; in whom she hath all things, yea more than all things. Because she prefers his Love, his Sweetness, and his Joyous Fruition, before all the things that are Created and Transient, and covets his Honour above them all; loving it beyond all Crowns and Diadems. And hence it is impossible for her to boast of any Good possessed by her; or vainly either to flatter her self, or to suffer her self to be flatter'd by others. He is her Glory, her Praise, and her Exultation. He is unto her the true and unmixed Joy, the Supreme and Fountain-Good, her whole Desire and Consummation.

Thus she boasts in the Beloved alone, resting in and leaning upon Him solely: But yet she cannot be at rest, without he be also loved and adored by others, as by her. Therefore she pants, and sighs, and wrestles, that many may Rejoice together with her, and may enjoy this chief and sovereign Good without end, both here and hereafter.

For she earnestly begs him, and with mighty Groans and Intercessions, through the Spirit, addresses her self before his Footstool, Beseeching him that he would be pleased to make himself known unto all Men; and that he would convert all, and draw all unto himself: That so He alone may of all be Praised and Glorified, whose Will it is that all may be saved. For her Beloved is Supreme Charity, and a Well of Love that can never be exhausted. For he loveth All, *more* than he can be loved of All; even Every one Individually, more than All together are ever capable of exerting their Love to him.

Nevertheless, whosoever shall have an earnest Longing to Love him from the very Ground of the Soul, such an one, though he may possibly not arrive to
love

love him according to this ground, is yet well-pleasing and acceptable in his sight; since his manner is to devour all in Love, and by infinite degrees to overcome and surpass them.

O how profitable, how pleasant, and how joyful a thing is it to sit in silence, and commune with God; and, as one dead out of the World, to enjoy his Company in the Solitude of the Heart, being ravished with his Love! O Love that can never be drawn dry! Would to God that I were *thoroughly* Dead to this World, that I might henceforward be moved with no Affection to what is Transitory, nor carried out to fix my Eyes upon any Creature whatever: And that I were so joined to him through Love, as I might evermore live in him; and so glorifie him, for whom to die is Life, even Life Eternal.

CHAP. X.

Of Sequestration from Creatures.

Theophilus aspires from the Creaturely to the Divine
LOVE.

* *Lo, I get me away far off; and remain in the Wilderness, [or, in Solitude,] Psalm. lv. 7.*

I. *Theoph.* **O** How good, how pleasant, how joyful, how sweet it is to sit in Solitude, to hold one's Peace, and to speak with GOD; and so to enjoy the sole *Chief GOOD*, in which *All Goods* are contain'd!

* *Ecce elongavi fugiens, & mansi in Solitudine.*

O that I were both so conjoined with that most *Simple* and *Only* GOOD, as I might be moved by no Affections, and hurried by no Distractions, of Transitory Things; that I might not adhere to any Creature, or be in love with any Visible Thing; or out of Curiosity lend my Eyes to see and observe what passeth without! But, *Wretched Man that I*
 Rom. vii. *am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death?* For, alas! how often dieth away my Soul, for the sake of the Creatures which it loveth? Oftentime for their sake it forgetteth the Creator, and is seduced, and miserably ensnared.

My unstable Mind now willeth this, now that; now it is here, now again it is there; seeking after Peace in the Creatures and not finding it. For as much as every Creature, though it may have some Delight for Use, yet affordeth no Satisfaction for Fruition.

Unsearcheable indeed is the Heart of Man, and who knoweth it? O Lord, thou knowest the Thoughts of Man, how vain they are: Thou tracest all
 Jer. xvii. his Steps; and afar off thou understandest
 Psal. xciv. and winnowest all his Ways. Wherefore what meaneth my Heart after this manner to amuse it self, and thus to bow down before Images and lying Vanities?

II. O GOD Everlasting, Supreme and Infinite, the Maker and Governour of all things, I am thy Creature, which thou madest in thy Power, and which thou upholdest in thy Love. To love thee, of a Truth, was I made. And at this time willing also am I to love thee; but am not able to do this, according to what I am willing. For the Truth is, I am bound with Vain Love, I am fetter'd, I am chain'd; I am held, alas! to the Earth with the glutinous Affection of fading Things, the Birdlime of the wicked Fowler; from which, while I strive to shake my self, and make my escape, either I cannot do it at all,

or

or at least not without very great Pain and Grief. Ah! what can I do? Thou knowest, Lord, that I can do nothing of my self. At the best, it is grievously painful to me, as I am thus glued to this Visible Creation; and every Attempt of this sort is, without thy assisting Grace and Goodness, most irksome to the Soul. Alas, how is my Soul still hamper'd with these low and sordid Affections! O how gladly would I love thee, O Lord! But I cannot, yea, I cannot, as I would. Who shall deliver my Feet out of the Net of the false Love? O the strong Magnetism of Earth attracting my Mind! Who is there that shall dissolve it for me? It is thou, O God of Love, that must do it. Come, I pray: Come, dear Lord, and make haste to break all my Chains; for, lo! I am exceedingly pained.

O that thou therefore would'st but open in me thy Gracious Sweetness, and thy most Refreshing and Comfortable Savour! O that thou wert but Sweet unto my Mouth, and Honey to my Palate!

If thou wert so, Lord, how soon should they then flee all away, and perish, which have so captivated my Soul? O reveal therefore thy Sweetness to my inward Palate, that I may truly relish and savour thee as I ought: And that being drawn of thee, I may take my flight from all Creatures afar off, and lodge with thee, my Beloved, in the Mountains, the *Mountains of Spices*.

However, sometimes I see, by the sight of the Mind, thy Invisible Things, through those which are made; and Thee also, the chief Good, the true God, who inhabitest Eternity: And I make as it were a Ladder of the Creatures, whereby to ascend unto thee.

And it delights me to make a stay in these Meditations: But presently, I know not with what Blast, as one driven hence violently away, I am recalled from this Study and Delight of mine, and am, poor lan-

guishing Wretch, detain'd afresh in the Love and Bondage of Visibles. How doth it sometimes delight and please me to converse with the Invisibles ! But then again, how soon am I laid hold on, and captivated with this base Love of the things that are seen ! And being kept down with the Burthen and Weight thereof, cannot ascend up, as fain I would.

For, lo ! I firmly do purpose in my Heart, as the sign of the Covenant betwixt thee and me, that, for the sake of thy noble and precious Love, I will not regard or love any Creature : But on the contrary, despise them all, and even my very self ; and likewise forsake all things which may appertain to me, where and whenever thy Honour and the Interest of thy Kingdom shall be concerned.

III. But then, after this, there rise up in me the Thoughts of this World, and of the Flesh, that Kinswoman and Neighbour of mine, full of Sin ; so sweetly insinuating themselves into my Heart, as if in them were some Felicity : And as if I were to lose, forsooth, some great matter of Good, should I despise or slight them : They making a shew of a Cheerful Countenance, but hiding and concealing the Fearful End ; putting on a good Face, to cover a filthy and monstrous Tail ; letting that only be seen which is Present, but with perfect Silence covering over that which is Future, and the Evil Consequences that necessarily attend the present Imaginary Goods.

It is pretended for this, that Thou every where, and in all the Creatures, art to be sought for, and enjoyed ; and that nothing consequently is to be cast away or despised ; which yet was nevertheless done by Thee, my Lord, and my God. And so they lead me aside oftentimes from my Purpose : And at length do altogether Seduce me ; and I am drawn by them into the Snares of Death.

IV. O how vain, how deceptory, and how almost nothing do they prove, even in their best and flourishing State ! And how after their transient, momentary Pleasures do they flee away, and are scattered most swiftly, leaving me amongst the Thorns and Thistles of an Evil Conscience !

Wo is me, Lord : Yea, wo is me ; that I have at some times sooner trusted and assented to *Vanity*, than to thee the Eternal *Verity* : And that so easily I have forsaken thee, O thou unspotted Truth.

Oh ! How greatly have I sinned herein, that to the neglecting of all things I did not cleave to thee alone ! Since what have I in Heaven but thee ? And what should I desire in the Earth with thee ?

For to love and to enjoy thee I was created ; but inordinately following the Creatures, I have left thee, and in them have found no Rest or Satisfaction to my Heart. But turn me, O LORD, unto thee : Turn me, good Lord ; and suffer me not to go after Earthly Objects, who has vouchsafed to promise Heavenly ones to such as follow THEE.

V. Now Praise and Glory be to thee, O God of all Grace and Consolation, who hast so sweetly drawn my Soul unto thee : And given Wings to my Soul, that she might fly away as into the Wilderness ; where she may securely rest under thy hiding, and be safe from the Deluge of the World and Satan cast out against her. O blessed Solitude of the Soul, that waiteth upon and converseth with her God ! O my God, how sweet is the Meditation of thee to my Heart ! How insipid now are all the Creatures to me, in comparison of thee, sweetest, dearest Lord ! Yea they are even Bitterness it self, and intolerable Nauseousness, without thee, O Fountain of all Grace and Sweetness. Wherefore my Soul rejoiceth, refusing all creaturely Consolation, for sake of thy Love : And my Heart bursteth forth in thy Praise, who hast dealt

with me after this manner. All Glory be to thee, O Lord, for breaking the Bonds of Creaturely Affection, and for so powerfully attracting me to follow after thy Majesty.

C H A P. XI.

Of Contempt of all Earthly Comforts.

Theophilus, Philothea, and the Beloved here confer together.

My Soul refuseth Comfort, Psal. lxxvii. 2.

I. *Theoph.* **W**ander not forth, O my Soul, after Vanities, nor after lying Madnesses; but be turned to the LORD thy God; for he is the Fountain of all Consolation.

Whatever thou shalt look for in Men, or in any Creatures thou shalt lose, and shall be sensible too of thy Loss: Because, tho' somewhat of Comfort or Ease may appear, yet nothing thereof can abide, in them.

Why deceivest thou thy self for nought? Surely it is a Folly to beg of a *Beggar*, when a rich Person is minded to give thee enough. What more mad than to seek of the *Poor*, who have it not themselves, what the *Rich* are most ready to give but for asking!

Every Creature is as this *poor Beggar*, with respect to Comforts, which cannot help it self, much less another: But GOD is the *Rich One*, who out of the Riches of his Grace, giveth to all Men liberally, Jam. i. and upbraideth not; that is, provided thou seek diligently, and wait patiently.

II. *Philothea.*

II. *Philoth.* Return, O Soul: Return, O Dove, to thy *Noah* in the Ark, to Christ into the secret Closet of thy Heart; because it is not safe for thee to be long abroad. Refuse to be comforted *outwardly*, if thou hast a mind to be recreated *inwardly*.

Tarry not with the Raven without the Ark; but immediately flee from the Carcase. Being hungry return; Christ shall feed thee with the Bread of Heaven.

If Necessity however should press thee, or Infirmitie should now and then keep thee *without*; take Heed of Delay, come again presently *within*, that thou perish not with the Deluge of Words, neither be caught in the Snare of the Tempter.

Many are the Gins for that Soul which loves to gad abroad, and great are the Securities and Preservations of that Dove which uses suddenly to return again. Which when she could *find no rest for the sole of her Foot, returned unto him into the Ark.* Go Gen.vii. thou, and do in like manner. Return unto thy Jesus; who is reaching out his Hand unto thee: Return into the Ark of thy Salvation.

III. Blessed is that Soul whose Conscience is clean before God, and is not captivated with any vain thing: Neither is polluted with the Love, nor consumed away with the Hatred of any created Object.

Blessed is that Soul, which seeketh no Consolation from any Creature; but placeth all her Hope in GOD.

Blessed is that Soul, which rejecteth all temporal Rest, with whatever appertains to the Conveniences of the Flesh; and freely embraceth for Christ's sake Labour and Want.

Blessed is that Soul which committeth it self to God, that he may do with it, as it shall seem good to him.

Blessed is the Soul which never seeks her own Glory, never desires her own Will to be done; but intends, loves, and purposes God's Glory and Will in all things whatever.

Blessed, in a Word, is the Soul which alienates her self from all manner of Temporals; and keeps her self pure, as in the Presence of God, in all her Acts.

IV. Whatsoever Soul thou art, standing in such a Frame as this, rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for as much as thou art made able to converse in the most inward and Heavenly Places, to abide in secret Contemplation and Meditation, and to praise God Night and Day.

Happy and blessed of God is that Soul, whose Desires are lifted upward: Whose Hands and Arms are stretched forth, as the two Wings of the Cherubims: whose Eyes are clean, that they may contemplate GOD.

All whose Vigour and Labour presseth more deeply inward, and ascendeth, and returneth not till she have found him, whom she loveth before all. And when she shall have found him, then forgetting all, she followeth him, whithersoever her Beloved shall please, and shall lead her. For so soon as he shall speak, she will rejoyce at his Voice, which says unto her,

Beloved. *I am thy Beloved: The only one whom thou hast chosen. I am thy exceeding great Reward. Be thou humble in Prosperity, and strong in Adversity. Behold they that love me, how they are comforted by me! How pleasantly, how deliciously, thinkest thou will they be treated, when having put off all the Painsfulness of Body and Soul, they shall be received of me into everlasting Rest!*

V. Theoph. O that I might but enjoy such a Sweetness, such a Pleasure, such a Delight, as thou O ho-
ly

ly Soul, Beloved of God, and to him devoted! O that I might but a little perceive of that sweet Taste, which by laying the Senses asleep the Soul is capacitated to receive, when she is carried up into the Spirit, and is elevated above her self into Embraces of her Beloved; and is knit and united to GOD by the Bond of intimate Love.

O my God, the Treasure of my Heart, thou art not ignorant, how this would be the only Refreshment and Relief of my Grief, that is hidden within.

But thou art the Bestower of this Unction, and the Pourer of it forth, out of thy mere Grace. Thou teacheest, thou exhorteest, thou cherishest, thou comfortest, thou promoteest and sustaineest; thou leadeest forward, and thou leadeest back; and thou dost with the Soul, which thou hast chosen, even as thou wilt: And all is good whatever thou *dost* and *willest*.

I acknowledge my self a Vessel, that is, as it were, tainted and soured, and wholly unfit and unworthy for the Infusion of thy good Spirit: But yet thou, Lord, canst, and wilt (I hope) remove this accursed Taint and Sourness. And then I beseech thee to enlarge to me the sacred Emanation of this Spirit, so far as I may be both able to taste the internal Sweetness of thy intimate Love, and to participate aforehand of those Celestial Delicacies and Dainties which thence do spring forth. For as for that Soul which studiously waiteth on thee, being emptied of her self, I know that thou wilt not disappoint her; but wilt give her, at Seasons, a Taste hereof.

And I have even scented from afar the Celestial Spices, as I have been meditating on the interior Studies of the Mind, from an holy Soul.

But thou, Lord, knowest how rare with me, and how slender the Meditation of the eternal Invisibles is; how frequently nought but dry insipid Words;
how

how gross and dull the Understanding; how disturbed and unpacified the Conscience; how huddled and confused all my Inwards, how unenlightened and undevout; and that not through any others, but through my own Fault alone.

Nevertheless seeking sometimes the way toward the interior things of the Kingdom; and taking with me, in secret, Meditations and Reflections, I seriously set about the Consideration of the Benefits and Privileges of an elect Soul espoused to Christ: As, how great the Heavenly Joys are in the Heart of such an one; how vast the Spiritual Delights; how ravishing the Angelical Delicacies; what manner of Peace, what Tranquillity, what Sereneness, what Hope and Exultation in God *her Saviour*. Whose Speech is sweet, and Face pleasant: Whose Stay, though short,

* *Is full of rapt'rous Pow'r,
A short, but pleasing Hour?*

Now while I am thinking on these Matters, and thou art enlightening my Darknes, I find that thou hast just Complaints concerning me: And I feel and perceive as † by the *little hidden Chinks* of Grace, that such and such is the Soul which is intimately united to thee; and so and so thou speakest to her.

She is silent from all things sensible: And thou speakest to her, in Spirit, of those that are invisible and insensible. She seems to be as forsaken by all the Creatures: And thou comfortest her by ways that are unutterable.

* *Et licet brevis sit mora,
Est tamen gratiosa Hora.*

† *Per occultas Gratia rivulas,*

Again,

Again I spake these things in my Heart, viz.

Wo to the sinning Soul, to the dull Conscience, to the lukewarm Conversation, that has neither the *Light* of Grace, nor the solacing Joy of the Spirit: To him that seeketh for Tears, and findeth none.

Peace be to that Soul, which sincerely loveth Christ, and never turneth aside the Eyes of her Heart from him; but always is seeking after such things as are well pleasing to him. For in Peace and Righteousness she shall walk, and a Stranger shall not intermix with her Joy.

She shall see how good it is to wait on him in Stillness, after having stopped her own Activity: And shall taste that the Lord her God, in whom she trusteth, is sweet. She will remove her self afar off from all external Tumults: And to her great Edification, and Progress, she will expect his coming, as she is most recollected inwardly. Behold, thus GOD doth operate in his chosen Vessels. If any one come unto him, such shall not be turned back empty: For none would he have to be turned away, who freely giveth Water to the Thirsty, and Bread to the Hungry.

O my God, when thou shalt enter into the House of the Soul that loveth thee, wilt thou not feed her with thy Milk, and lead her sometimes out of, and beyond her self, through the Abundance of thy Sweetness, to the end she may receive thee without all bodily Image?

O Truth, Truth! How great is the Power and Activity of Love? How great is its Worth? And its Energy who can find out?

Then speakest THOU to her thy Word most secretly, and shewest her all things, new and old, those particularly that are called *the last things*, in most happy Fruition, and fruitive Charity, whereat all human

man Words must cease. From thenceforward thou makest her most fully to confide in thee, as to Rest everlasting, and her Fellowship with the Saints in Bliss: Forasmuch as by laying thus down before an *Earnest* of Spiritual Grace; thou makest her stronger, certainly, both in the Hope of such things as she beholdeth not, and in the Contempt of the present things which fall under the Sense.

Then my Soul refused to be comforted with any of the things that she could meet with in this Land of her Pilgrimage; and being made thus to despise all Earthly Consolations, in Comparison of those inestimable ones, whereof a small Earnest had been graciously given me. I found how poor and naked I was when that was withdrawn. And moreover, I was greatly *Hungry*, as being unable to feed longer on the Husks of this World: And in the Earnestness of my craving Hunger, my Soul cryed out, and said: “Be
“ mindful of me a poor Beggar (O Father most
“ gracious) through the Bowels of thy Mercy: And
“ send down the true *Bread* from Heaven, the *Good*
“ WORD, full of Consolation and of Grace. *Then*
he heard me.

C H A P. XII.

*Of the great Sweetness and Consolation found in
G O D.*

Theophilus and the B E L O V E D.

* *All my Bones shall say, L O R D, who is like unto thee,
Psal. xxxv. 10.*

Theoph. **H**E is *One*; and *like* to him there is none:
And every thing compared to him is *no-
thing*. He is my GOD, and my ALL: My intimate
Beloved, and my most faithful Friend; who never
forsaketh any one that loveth him, and freely associa-
teth himself with whomsoever is his Lover.

And if at any time he hides himself, or permits the
Lover to be straiten'd; he doth this not that he may
cast away; but that he may gather: Not for *Reproba-
tion*; but for *Probation*, for *Purgation*, and for *In-
struction*, or *Information*. He doth not now therefore
at all forsake or desert; but doth more wisely instruct
and inform: So as every one may appear what he is
of himself, and how far he hath attained.

Thou art Fair, my Beloved, and exceeding Lovely:
Yet not to the Flesh, but to the Mind; not to the
outward Eye, or Sense, but to the inward; even to
the Soul that Believeth, that hath a clean Heart, and
that is of her own accord sweetly transported toward
Invisible and Spiritual Objects. Whosoever therefore
is desirous of being by *Devout Affection* united to
thee, must of necessity mortifie in himself every Car-

nal Affection; and above all, retain Purenests of Conscience; and Integrity of Heart:

For it is displeasing to thee, if any one go out to frail Creatures, to beg of them Relief and Consolation. Nor is there a more egregious Folly, than to run after them, for what it is not in their Power ever to give me.

For this end thou callest me *Inward*, that I may love thee; and commandest, that by Love I expect thee. For I shall be sure to find thee as often as in this Expectation I postpone my self: And whensoever as thou willest, so also I do will. Since as often as loving thee, I expect; and expecting thee, I prefer thee before my self; and thus preferring thee, I will as thou allowest and willest; nought can ever, I am sure, disappoint me in the Quest of thee, my Lord.

And this shall here be all my Advantage, and my Benefit, that I may freely worship, and disinterestedly serve Thee: And so Worshiping and serving thee for thine own self, may have no concern at all for the loss of the Creatures; but, as wholly fearless of any Losing *by* Love, and against all Trading *with* Love; may tend continually forward to the Perfection hereof; in order to arrive at the desired Unity.

O that I might thus Love, Worship, and Serve Thee, without fearing either loss *through*; or practising Avarice *with* this so Heavenly an Affection! And that nothing of Merchandizing, or of Usury, might creep at all into it! For Love is no Usurer, or Niggard: And Thou, who art the only Object of my Love, approvest the Soul which loveth Thee *purely*.

O that Soul, that blessed Soul, which thus is one! One in Life, and One in Death with Thee alone.

But as for me (ah me!) I am cast out far from thee; and often do I go straggling by another Way, loving and pursuing after the things that perish; and this neither as I ought, with respect to the Manner, or to the End, which is fit:

Yet that I perish not together with these, O may I return very suddenly, considering in them thy Praises, and directing through them my Affections to thee!

Do thou, O Lord my God, who madest All Things out of Nothing, make me out of All Things to sing Lauds unto Thee, glorifying thine holy Name. For thine is the Power, thine is the Wisdom, thine is the Goodness, thine the Mercy and Compassionateness, thine also the Everlasting Majesty and Glory: All are thine; and thine for ever and ever are all the Glories that can be conceived.

Rev. iv.
Matt. xix.
Rev. vii.

Thy Kingdom is an Everlasting Kingdom, and thy Dominion endureth throughout all Ages. From Generation to Generation thou art King: Thou disposest all things, both those which are above, and those which are in the Earth below.

Thou knowest all things; thou hast all things in thine Hand; nothing resisteth thee, nothing disturbeth thee: But with stillness thou judgest all things; and even the Rebellious also thou subduest to thyself, and causest them too to serve.

Thou understandest all things which are transacted in the Universe; and before they are done, thou hast concluded them within a certain Bound. Thou art the God of Heaven and Earth, the Creator and Governor of all things, Visible and Invisible, and the Disposer and Orderer of all Times.

Preserve, I beseech thee, thy Servants all the World over, and such, in the first Place, as are more specially Dedicated and Deputed to thy Service and Ministry, wheresoever they may be dispersed, or howsoever distressed: Cause them to declare forth thy Praises, and with the Voice of Concord every where to publish thy Glory. Stir up their Hearts powerfully in the Love of Thee; and grant them

T

Strength

Strength whereby they may perfect all their Works with this Holy End, and consummate them to thy Honour alone.

O how Kind, how Sweet, how Good art Thou to them that *love* Thee! How Pleasing, how Grateful, how Delicious to them that *taste* Thee! They that have Experienced thy Sweetness, have learnt thence both to Think and Speak better concerning it. They alone can speak thereof in some Measure as is fit.

For unto what can it be compared? Since thy Sweetness overcometh every Sweetness; and Sweetness every Bitterness.

O LORD my God, Holy Men of Old, having the Taste thereof, have spoken of Thee; and the Prophets have not been silent. All the Saints that have ever been from the Foundation of the World, have believed in Thee, have served Thee, have in their Sacrifices and Oblations worshipped Thee, have praised thy Holy Name, have blessed and magnified thy Glorious Majesty; in as much as they have known Thee their Creator, and the Maker and Builder of all things, and have hoped in Thee above all things.

They have known thee in their Visions; for thou didst reveal thy Name unto them: Beside thee, none did they know.

They kept the Law of thy Commandments, which thou gavest them; they went not after the most foolish Inventions of false Gods, but adored Thee only the *living God*; Thee, the Creator of all things, they acknowledged, and spake of thy Goodness, and thy Truth everlasting, who *livest* for ever and ever.

They lifted up their Voice in the Confession of thy Praise: For that thou from on High didst pour into their Ears, a great, a mighty Voice, saying,
 Exod. iii. "I AM THAT I AM. BEFORE ME
 Isa. xlii. "THERE WAS NO GOD FORMED:
 "NEITHER SHALL THERE BE AFTER ME.

"I have

“ I have made those Things which yet are to Be :
 “ And those that are past are not perished from my
 “ Memory.

These Words hearing, and also understanding, they lifted up even afar off the Eyes of Faith, believing that Thou wast to save all the Ends of the Earth: And that he that was to come, would come, and would not Lye.

Thou spakest unto them, and saidest, I, EVEN I AM THE LORD : AND BESIDE ME IS NO SAVIOUR. They heard, and believed, and hoped; waiting for Thee accordingly to come: who didst come, and didst not fail.

They foreknowing then these things, which in the Fulness of Time were to come to pass, were comforted not a little; and vehemently admiring the Presence of the Majesty that was to presentiate it self Bodily, through Astonishment they fainted away, and there remained in them no Strength or Comeliness.

When taking a little Breath, and coming to themselves again, as through Joy beholding the Power of God that was coming, they could not forbear to burst out after such a manner as this, and say: “ He, even He is the Lord our God; and there is none besides. He hath Begun, and he will save
 “ us. *He cannot deny HIMSELF, because* 2 Tim. ii.
 “ *He is True.*

“ As we have Heard, so also have we Seen; as we
 “ have Believed, so also do we Speak, and
 “ bear witness to the Truth. Once hath 1 John i.
 “ GOD Spoken: He said the Word, and
 “ they were made. He said, MY COUN- Psal. xxxiii;
 “ SEL SHALL STAND: But yours, O Isai. xlv.
 “ Children of Men, shall perish.

“ Wo to them that devise Iniquity, that imagine
 “ to themselves what is useles; and that
 “ having heard, deride the Words of Mic. ii.

“ GOD most High. Wo unto you who carve out of
 “ your own Heart Wisdom, and who in your own
 “ Power are exalted. Wo unto you who do feign
 “ a Religion out of your own Brain, and are lifted
 “ up in your own Strength and Policy.

“ Hear the Word of the LORD, ye that seek the
 “ LORD, and know that He hath a Con-
 Hof. iv. “ troversie with the Inhabitants of the Earth,
 “ and that his Judgment is with the strong Foundati-
 “ ons thereof; because there is no Wisdom, no Pow-
 “ er, no Truth in Man.

“ O hear his Voice! Hear, O ye Mountains, the
 “ Lord’s Controversie; and let the Hills hear the
 “ Voice of his Judgment, and bow down thereat.
 “ Why will ye be as the deaf Adder? It is not good
 “ that ye be turned aside: Stand ye, and consider his
 “ Ways. Turn again, O turn again, and come;
 “ freely he will receive you: For Merciful and Gra-
 “ cious is the Lord.

“ He keepeth not Wrath, as Man; but
 Ex. xxxiv. “ pardoneth Sins and Transgressions, and
 Jon. iv. “ moreover will restore the former with
 Hof. xi. “ the latter Grace. Only be ye converted
 “ with all your Heart; and give your selves unto him,
 “ to serve him with a faithful Mind.

These are the Saints Words sounding in my Ears.

As Musick at a Banquet, and as Incense fuming
 from the Censer, so is the Word of God in a pure
 Heart. Even so thy Saints, O Lord, being filled with
 thy Spirit, have for a Memorial of most sweet Savour,
 expressed forth the Abundance of thy Sweetness to-
 ward them: and have left their Expressions, and Ex-
 perimental Sayings, to be expressed forth again by me,
 as out of a deep ground of the Heart rising up, and
 ascending to Heaven in a Pillar of Fire.

But my Speech is commonly enclosed, and shut up
 in strait Limits, and hard Confinements; so that it
 hath

hath no room to ascend. Nevertheless if *Fire* come down from above, then shall my Speech also be all *on fire*: And my Words shall ascend up into thy holy Tabernacle. Then, then shall I speak, as with a *fiery Tongue*, of the superabounding Sweetness of thy Love: and my enlarged Soul shall have room to mount, and freely to play, in the most ravishing and melodious Exercise of thy Praises.

This *holy Fire* of Love descending on me, and filling me, my Words will then surely be *Words tried in the Fire*. And as it shall wax within me hotter and hotter, it must needs even consume me: that is, consume all that I am in my self.

I shall not, I cannot, hence subsist before it: All Self-hood cannot but here evanish and disappear. For as Chaff by the Wind, so shall all Sadness, because it is grounded in *Self*, with all manner of Earthliness, and all Superfluity of Naughtiness, hereby be driven from the Heart: And even as Rust is by the Fire, so shall by it my Sins be utterly consumed. The Divine Fire burning up all things, shall thus cleanse the Floor of my Heart.

O let this Fire burn in me, and having burnt up all that is of me, *create* in me a *clean Heart*! O let it come quickly; yea, quickly! that I herewith may be *ensired* and *renewed*. Come, O Fire, come! Enkindle me: Touch me but a little, and I shall fly away.

How of a suddendoth it Transform! Behold! by it I am quite another than I was! O Blessed *Descension* of this Fire, this sweet Fire! O most Blessed *Ascension* of this most powerful, this most rapturous Flame of Love!

All Old Things shall now with me pass away; and in their stead the New Things shall in all abundance succeed: and Holy Desires shall flow and overflow. And they shall rise up together on every side, and shall go forth wheresoever the Spirit bloweth, and fanneth with his all-cherishing Breath. There

shall be no Fear more; but Love shall fill all: And Tribulation shall then cease; for this Change is the Change of the Right Hand of the Lord: And no more henceforth shall there be any Shakings. The Right Hand of the Lord hath done it.

That therefore which I speak, is the Praise not of me, nor of any Creature, but of Him. Consolation is sent to the Mourner; Bread is given to the Beggar, and Food dispersed to him that hungereth; the Thirsty hath received a comforting Draught; the Healing Hand is laid upon the Sick; the wearied Traveller hath a Staff given him to lean on; he that before halted, is made to leap and sing in God's Ways; to the Wanderer a Guide is come, and to the Staggerer a firm Support; he that was Fainting hath now recovered Strength, and he that was Tired hath found Rest. To him that was in Despair, a Light is seen to arise; even a Light new, and never seen by him before: And to him that cried, yea cried aloud, and in the Bitterness of his Soul, an Answer is brought, an Answer of Joy and Consolation.

I was Dim in my Sight, very Dim and Dark; and my Darknes is taken away: So that in the Light of my God I now behold Light. I was Ignorant, and the *Way* was shewn me; I knocked, and presently the *Door* was opened to me; I groaned for my Error, and the *Truth* was present with me: When I wavered, *Authority* stepped in to succour me; and when I affectionately sought her, my Mother *Charity* met me, presenting her self to me: And as I was longing to discourse with my Beloved, behold he himself, with a great deal of Tendernefs, meets me too; and being exceeding glad of this Meeting, yea, gladder than I my self could be, thus He addresseth himself to me:

Beloved. "Lo! I am present with thee, tell me
 " what this new thing is that hath happened unto
 " thee. But see it slip not from thee, in this Excess

“ of thy Joy, what thou art both to *suffer*, and to
“ *do*, for My Name sake.

Now as I was willing to go forward along with him, he did not prohibit me at all. So I presently ascended: and I forgot whatever Trouble I had.

Then was I desirous to abide and dwell with Him. And as I was thus desirous to stay there, and go no more from him, he was not willing to grieve me; but with soft and gentle Words declared to me, how that for the present it was not convenient so to be.

Beloved. “ Thy Desire (*saiſt he*) is good, and well-
“ pleasing is the Prayer which thou haſt preſented
“ unto me: But it is meet yet for a while to be deſer-
“ red. Go thou, and return back then into thine
“ Houſe; and declare to thoſe of thy Spiritual Con-
“ ſanguinity, how great things the Lord hath done
“ unto thee. And ſay unto them: *Prepare ye every*
“ *one your Hearts; and lay aſide the heavy Burthen*
“ *that depreſſeth you to the Earth; and be ye Cautious,*
“ *and Valiant, againſt the Snares of the Evil One.*
“ *Watch ye, and Pray, that ye enter not into*
“ *Temptation. The Time is near: See that* *Matt. xxvi.*
“ *I find you ready. Behold, I have foretold you.*

C H A P. XIII.

Of the Only and Supreme GOOD: And the Manner of Seeking it.

Philothea and Theophilus: Who are both Visited by the Beloved.

Say unto my Soul, I am thy Salvation, Psal. xxxv. 3.

I. **O** How Noble art thou, O Soul! and how wonderful a Power in thee lies hidden; who canst not rest, before thou hast reached the *Sovereign Good*, and found the *Ultimate End*! Which being known and found, thy Motion then ceaseth.

Philoth. O GOOD, that art above every Good! and END, without End; when shall I enjoy Thee without Measure, and without End? It must not be denied, but that I find *many* Good Things here, even in my Passage to thee; but which do Refresh only, not Satisfie. And if these satisfie not, let them be never so *many*, or seem never so *great*, in vain is the Soul *careful* or *troubled* about them.

But ONE is Needful. This *One* Thing Luke x. needful I seek: This *One* I desire. For the sake of One are All Things; and out of One are All Things. If I can but have This, I shall be contented: And unless I do obtain it, I shall be always fluctuating and wavering; for *many things* cannot fill me.

Theoph. -And I said, what is this ONE?

II. *Philoth.* I know not what to say: Yet this I know, and this I feel, that I want it, and that I desire it also: And that nothing either is, or can be so much as thought on, Better or Greater than it.

For this is not One *amongst* All; but is One *above* All. It is MY GOD, to whom, and in whom, it is good for me to *Adhere*, and *Inhere*. Yea, exceeding good it is for me to cleave unto him, and him only: And *in* (as well as *for*) him only to live, by his Spirit living in me. To him I say, to him I cry, to him I call aloud: *Say unto my Soul, I AM THY SALVATION.*

What is there beyond this that thou longest for, O Soul full of Desires? What is there now that thou covetest after besides? Is it not better that thou adhere to One, than to many? Out of *One* Many are: Not out of *Many* ONE.

Cease then to seek after these Many: Join thy self to One; cleave to One. In One the whole doth consist. And *this is the WHOLE of Man.* It is his whole Duty, and his whole Interest.

Let others seek Many and Various things *Without*: Do thou seek the One, the *Inward* Good; and it sufficeth for thee.

III. Here is One that is desirous of a pleasant Country Seat; another loves more the City, and his Thoughts perhaps are taken up with Merchandizing: This Man is for heaping up to himself much Silver and Gold; but that is more carried away after Pleasures, as another is after Honours: Again some seek after the Company and Diversion of Friends and Relations; and some spend their time in Visits of another Nature, and disdain not for this to study all the little trifling Arts of Conversation: One has an itch forsooth to view Towns and Castles; and another to observe Men, and Manners: Some have the Curiosity too of rambling here and there, only to pick up what Rubbish they can find of the old Tower of *Confusion*, though they go even to the World's End for it; but others are pleased better to sit at home *upon their own Lees*, and there dream away their Lives, in following

following blindly their own fond and broken Inventions : One aimeth at Humane Wisdom and Learning, as if there were nothing beyond it ; another is greedy of Power, whether it be Civil or Ecclesiastical : Some carry their Ambition into the Field, and think of no Glory but what is to be won in Battles and Sieges ; and some again at Home are as much, or more, pleased to entertain themselves but with hearing or reading the News thereof : The Head of one is always full of Proclamations and Matters of State ; but of another it is only of private Amusements and petty Toys : To one nothing is more pleasant than the *Walking* and *Rambling* of the Soul ; but to another *better is the Sight of the Eye*, with the Lust thereof, *than the Walking of the Soul*, or *Wandering of the Desire* : And, in a word, there is no end of the strange Variety of Person's Choices, and of their Chimerical Pursuits in one as well as the other kind, with their daily Changes and Revolutions ; so long as they stand in the *Multiplicity*, and are far off from the *Unity*.

For in this manner one is for this, another for that thing, and even the same Person both for this and that too at different times ; whereby is built up, and maintain'd, in the World, that great *City of Confusion*, whose Foundations are on the *Waters*, yea on *many Waters*. But wo unto him, that buildeth on the Waters : And that, neglecting the one thing necessary, troubles himself about the many that are unnecessary ; while he adheres not to the Rock, but is tossed hither and thither continually by the Waves of his own Imagination.

IV. Thus uncertain generally are the Researches of Mortals, while they seek after Good ; by departing from the one only Fountain of Goodness, and hewing out such and such Cisterns to themselves in the Creatures, which are not at all fit to contain or give forth so much as one Drop of true and solid Consolation.

Behold,

Behold, how every one, in his Imagination, reaches forth his hand to this, or that, Fruit of the Creatures; because it is *pleasant to their Eyes*. For thus it is both in the secular and Spiritual State: Since in the latter, no less than in the former, one is taken chiefly with *pleasant sensations*; another would be thought *Greater*; and a third *Wiser* than the rest: And some are for this *part*, and others for that, with respect to *each* of these, as, of Pleasure, Grandeur, Wisdom, or the like.

Broad indeed is this Way, wherein every one seeketh after, and diverteth himself with, what *seemeth* Good to him: And many, many they be that go in thereat; whose End is Destruction, unless they repent. Having forsaken *One* to seek Many, they must forsake again Many to seek *One*, and to seek it also *Onely*.

Few there be that seek ONE: And fewer still that seek this ONE for the sake of ONE: But fewest they that seek it for its *own* sake (not only principally, but,) *purely* and *simply*.

And hence it is they neither find a settled Peace; nor have a true relish of inward Grace.

For they that are Christ's cannot mind the things below, or without: They are like to get nothing but rather to lose, by abounding with these. If they are his, they must love him *for* himself, and *purely* for himself: And this can never be done without the greatest *Simplicity*, and Singleness. Lay this to thy Heart.

V. *Theoph.* Do not then, O simple and devout Soul, such things as so many (even almost all) are seeking, and pursuing after, appertain also to thee?

Philoth. No, verily.

Theoph. That is strange. Is there no Consideration of *Temporals* to be had in a Life that is Temporal?

Philoth. None in Consideration of Him whom thou seekest, if thou seekest him *truly* : For if thou lovest him, and seekest him, as thou oughtest, that is, in Purity and Simplicity ; thou wilt for certain be most ready to quit and forsake all things for Love of him, and wilt commit thy self entirely into his hands both as to Soul and Body, without any manner of Solitude for the *many* things which commonly are desired.

Theoph. This will seem an hard Saying to most.

Philoth. But let it seem never so hard to any, we are sure that our Beloved has told us, who is the ONE among Ten Thousands, that we must not expect that he will own us for his, unless that we for his sake *forsake all things*.

Hark ! Hear his own Voice.

VI. *Beloved.* “ If any Man will come after me, let
 “ him deny himself, taking up his Cross in all things,
 “ to follow me. For if he think to save his Life, by
 “ Carefulness about *many* things, he shall certainly
 “ lose it : On the contrary, whosoever is content to
 “ lose his Life, and all that he hath, for my sake, shall
 “ not fail to find it again in the Regeneration.

Philoth. Let my Lord speak on : For I know that with thee are the Words of Truth.

Beloved. “ If any one come to me, and hate not,
 “ for the Love of me, what he Naturally loveth, as
 “ *his Father, and Mother, and other dearest Relations,*
 “ yea and *his own Life* also ; he cannot be *my Disci-*
 “ *ple.* Verily, Verily, he is not worthy of me.

Philoth. He is not worthy of *thee* indeed, O Sovereign Good. Let me lose therefore *all* things, that I may but find *thee* : Yea, let me lose my *self*, that I may but find, and possess, and keep that *One*, that *Only One*, that I love.

Theoph. Are all then to be lost, all to be forsaken, all to be hated and despised, for the sake of *one* ? And is there no Exception at all ?

Philoth.

Philoth. Thou hearest that thou art commanded to forsake all; as if thou hadst a perfect Hatred for them, whenever they stand in the least Competition with the *Chief Good*, or rather the *Only Good*. The Prohibition equally lies against All, *none excepted*. If thou hast an Ear to hear, thou must have heard it, I say, heard it in the fullest and most expressive Terms. And where no Limitation or Exclusion is made, see that thou make none to thy self.

VII. *Theoph.* I hear, O holy and devout Soul, what the *Beloved* hath commanded: But lo! I have been carried into the Wilderness, that I might be there tempted. And while the *Beloved* withdrew, the Tempter came; and carrying, me in the Spirit, up to an exceeding high Mountain, gave me a Prospect of all the Riches and Pleasures that are in all the Creatures, telling me that these were all mine, and quoting several Scriptures also to prove what he asserted. And then with a strong Asseveration he concluded, that these were all as much made for Man, as Man was made for God.

Philoth. He is a cunning Sophister, thou knowest: And will dextrously blend Truth with Falshood. Let him pretend never so much Kindness to thee, and speak also never so much Truth, be sure to turn away thine Ear: For under the shew of Kindness, and the covert of Truth, the Snare is laid for thee. Stay not to plead with him; let him use the Rhetorick of an Angel: But say to him roundly, *Get thee behind me, Satan*, even when he is transformed into a Figure most unlike his own; and when he is drawing all his Arrows out of the very Scriptures themselves.

Theoph. This is very ordinary, I find, with him: That he may thereby divert the Soul from her pursuit after her *Beloved*. For by distracting her among the *many things*, which he has learnt craftily to call *Creaturely Blessings*, his Design is evidently no other,
than

than that she be wheedled in hereby at last, to give to him that very Homage, and Worship, which is due to none but to the *Beloved*.

Philoth. Nay the Soul being carried out into the Creatures, and set upon this great Mountain, he presently casts such a Mist before her Eye, as she most easily mistakes him for the *Beloved*, as who is then withdrawn: And so she falls down and worships him; but knows not, so long as the Mist abides, whom it is she worships.

Theoph. How is this? Satan, Satan, get thee behind; if it be so. Yea, with all thy fair Offers *get thee behind me*: I have need of none of them. The LORD my God is *One*: He, even he is sufficient. And he has said to me, *I am thy Salvation*. For I am by many Titles *His*: And I will worship him only, and him only will I serve.

VIII. But yet there is a Law in my Members that draweth me back. — And doth any Man hate his own Flesh? Tell me then, I pray, what I am to do with the *Flesh*.

Philoth. Brother, we are not Debtors to the Flesh, to live after the Flesh. For if thou livest after the Flesh, to satisfy the Cravings thereof, thou shalt surely die: But if thou, through the Spirit, dost mortify the Deeds of the Body; thou shalt live, yea in living thou shalt live, and the second Death shall have no Power over thee.

Theoph. But how shall I know this?

Philoth. The Spirit it self shall bear Witness with thy Spirit, that thou art numbred among the Sons of God, and Heirs of his Heavenly Kingdom: And extinguishing in thee all Temporal and Earthly Desires, shall bring thee into the true Liberty of the *Spirit*.

Theoph.

Theoph. Then I perceive there is no such thing as true *Spiritual Liberty*, without the Extinction of every Desire after Temporal and Terrene Objects.

Philoth. There is none most certainly.

Theoph. Do none of these touch thee, O devout Soul, who art His Heir, whose are all the Kingdoms of the Earth?

Philoth. They touch me not; and I touch not them. My Father may give me what seems to him good: I dispute not his Will, whether it be to give, or to take. I am in his Hand: And his Will is undoubtedly best. He has taught me both how to want, and how to abound: And having nothing, he has made me to possess all things; for which ever blessed be his Name. Therefore in the midst of all I will adhere to him alone; who is himself become my Portion, and my Inheritance: That I may not go forth to seek for it into the Creatures.

Theoph. What sayest thou then to all the Pomp, and Grandeur, and Power, and Wealth, and Pleasure, which is every where at this Day so greedily courted: And that not by Seculars only, as I see, but even by Churchmen?

Philoth. I forsake them all: For the Object of my Love is one, and one only. This is the Good that I long for: The One Good, even *my Good*.

All beside, and all without this, are to me *Vanity*, and *Nothing*. All that would draw me from this, are *Vexation*, and *Death*. I detest all, I hate all, I despise all: All and every thing do I perfectly abhor, that would separate me from this One, which is a thousand, yea Millions of times better to me than all the World.

What shall separate me from it? Shall *Angels*, or *Principalities*, or *Powers*? no verily: Not any of these. Shall the *things present* of this Life, or *things to come* of the next; *Visibles*, or *Invisibles*; Temporal

ral, or Eternal Forms and Beauties? Verily, verily, none of these at all. *Nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature*, can do this.

IX. *Theoph.* O Blessed and most desirable State, to adhere to the One Fountain of Good! How meet and right is it, that I forsake all things in order to cleave to it! How just, that I detest every thing that would in the least separate me from it! Farewel then, all things for the sake of this One: Farewel, I say. I despise you all for the sake of this my *Beloved*, the One, the Onely One, that Virgin Souls admire, love and follow.

For this one thing have I desired, that I may obtain and possess this One, whatever I lose hereby. Great I know, will be my Gain, by losing all things to gain this. And should I lose this, what would it profit to win the whole World, and all that therein is? Wherefore leaving all, I take henceforth my self to One: One I have chosen; One I love; One I seek; One I pursue. And this is *The GOOD*, which is better to me than *all Goods*, below or above, in Earth or Heaven.

Philoth. Infinitely better. Wherefore if thou hast found so great a Good, I exhort and counsel thee, that thou carefully guard and keep That, for which thou hast thus despised all things. For having That, it will not be burthenfome, or grievous, to thee, to bear other Wants: Yea, moreover, thou wilt judge it exceeding fit and reasonable, both to give and suffer all things in lieu thereof.

Theoph. Seek therefore now, O my Soul, this so singular and supereminent a Good. As long as thou art in the Flesh, cease not to seek: For as much as that can never be sought enough, which can never be comprehended to the full.

X. *Philoth.* But there will be an end of Seeking when the Hour of Enjoying shall come. And then
shall

shall he be *ALL in All*, even he the *One Alone*, sufficient for All jointly and severally.

And if there he be sought for, where always he is found; it is not, as it is here: It is not with Pain and Labour; but with the highest Joy and Love, it is with Delight and Peace most ravishing.

But as for what he is to the Godly in this present Life, this may from several *Names* and Attributes be learnt: As likewise from many experienc'd Souls, who can from numerous *Experiments*, confirm the same. Yet mind a little what these *Names* are, according as my School-mistress Experience has taught me them, these Names I mean of the Divine Goodness, with respect to us Travellers here. I shall expound a few of 'em: But his Grace shall teach thee more, and even deeper ones.

XI. Lo! He is the *Bridegroom* of Holy Lovers: And of them that serve him with Fear, a *Master* striking Awe.

He is a *Father* to the Orphans: And to the Widow Soul, that is desolate and stript of all things, an *Husband*.

To the Helpless he is a present *Friend*: And to the Injured a most righteous *Judge* is he.

He is to the Sick a *Physician*: And to the Healthy *strong Meat*.

He is to the Ignorant a *Teacher*: And to them that obey him *Salvation*.

He is the *Way* to Beginners; the *Truth* to Proficients; and the *Life* to the more Perfect.

He is the *Hope* of the Penitent! And of the Righteous the best *Comfort*.

He is the *Glory* of the Humble: And the *Confusion* of the Proud.

He is *Light* in Darkness: And a *Lamp* to the Feet of the Pilgrims in the Night-season.

He giveth *Medicine* to sick Minds : And the *Wine* of Joyfulness he reacheth to the Melancholy.

He *standeth* with them that fight : he *walketh* with them that travel ; he *runneth* with them that are full of Fervour , and he *flieth* with them that contem-plate.

He is present with them that pray ; he *discourseth* with them that read ; he *resteth* with them that meditate.

Now in all these worketh one and the same God, appearing to every one according as he pleaseth. He is Wise and Good in all these. His Thoughts are most high, even while most condescending : Neither is there any searching out of his Works. For great and inscrutable are his Judgments : And none can say unto him, *Why dost thou thus ?* Or, why chusest thou one rather than another ? Foolish is every questioning of Man against the Almighty : And every Invention of the Sons of *Adam* is Vanity and Nought. How do these things please thee ; And how doth GOD now relish to thee ?

XII. *Theoph.* Sweet is his Savour to me : Nor can his Works displease me. All relisheth to me well, exceeding well. Righteous is he : And who shall lay Unrighteousness to his Charge ? Or, who shall say, his Ways are unequal ? Whosoever shall do this, he setteth himself up against him, even against the Almighty, and shall be reprov'd by the unreprouable Light, the Light of the Holy One : And thereby shall be greatly confounded.

O irreprehensible Light of God ! there is no Darkness, nor Shadow of Death, with thee ; where the Workers of Iniquity may hide themselves, who wander from the Unity after the Creatures. For thou wilt not lay upon Man more than is right : That he should enter into Judgment with God, or plead with the most High. Great are the things, and exceeding glorious,

glorious, which I have heard: And I am struck with Amazement and Silence.

Philoth. But those which thou hast heard, what are they in *his* Sight? All of it is scarce a *little Spark*, in respect of that which lies hid *within*.

Theoph. What is that? Canst thou not explain it?

Philoth. I know not what it is, but it is *somewhat that is all above me, and as it were a certain inaccessible Mist, the Beginning whereof, as well as its End, is unknown.*

Let thy Meditation therefore be rather upon the humble Steps of thy Saviour's *Humanity*, and let thy Affection here more frequently exert it self. Learn to converse, in the first place, with thy JESUS on the *Earth*; and to follow him in his Marches *here*, before thou attempt to ascend *where* he is now set down: And do not too suddenly presume to climb up to the Heights, lest thou be oppressed by the Glory.

Nevertheless because intense Love is sometimes forgetful of due Fear and Reverence, and knows not how to keep its proper Distance; it is to be tolerated, if now and then when the Loving Soul is all in a Flame on account of her *Beloved*, she seek out and consider him not only as a little Child laid in a Manger, and lamenting because of the Weaknesses of its Childish Nature; or as hanging on the Cross, and bearing the Load of a whole World of Sin and Misery; but also as he now gloriously reigneth *in Heaven*, and marvellously disposeth all things under Heaven, for the Manifestation of his Glory, and of his Good Will towards Man.

Theoph. Since then he is so altogether above my Capacity, even as a certain Cloud afar off, the Beginning and End whereof are unknown; I will therefore take heed not to mount up too high, lest I be confounded by his Glorious Majesty: But will chuse rather to

meditate frequently on the Humanity of the Blessed Jesus ; and to follow his Steps, while I remain upon the Earth, with all the earnestness and Diligence that is possible on my part, with the Aid of his strengthening and Comforting Grace. But as for thee, O Beloved Soul, thou may'st even follow thy Well-beloved, both in the Heights and Depths, without those Perils that I am exposed to, according as he, who is the Desire of thy Heart, shall attract thee.

XIII. *Philoth.* Gladly do I follow thee, O lovely and beloved JESU, on the *Earth* : But, were it thy Will, more gladly would I follow thee in *Heaven*.

Where my *Treasure* is, there fain would my *Heart* be also. Thou art my *Treasure*, dearer to me than the whole *Creation* : Thou who art at the right Hand of the Father, art all my *Substance*. For me thou wast *Incarnated* : For me thou art *Exalted*. An *Example* thou hast left me on the *Earth* : The *Reward* thou keepest for me in *Heaven*. Unto thee therefore mine Eyes are looking up : And after thee are all my Steps. Whithersoever thou goest, Lord, thither will I follow thee. For my Heart hath talked of thee, and thou hast talked as much to my Heart, saying, SEEK MY FACE. Therefore *Thy Face*, Psal. xxvii.
LORD, will I seek.

How long, LORD, is the Vision of thy Glory deferred ? Wherefore hidest thou thy Face, and holdest me for thine Enemy ? How canst thou hide thy self thus from me, when thou hast commanded me to seek thy Presence ; Why saidest thou to my Heart, *Seek thou my Face* ? O hide not thou longer *thy Face* from me. Full well thou knowest, how it is with a longing Soul ; and what an Uneasiness it must needs be to me, not to be where thou art. Thou knowest verily, that this my Mind is tossed to and fro ; carried continually now hither, now thither, in Quest after thee : And that my Affection can be at no manner of Rest,
but

but floweth and refloweth; draweth and withdraweth, here and there, and every where; so long till at last it come to be conjoined and united with thee, as with its own most amiable Object, in the Heavens.

For the Power that is in Love knows not how to rest, or give over: But, impatient of every Delay, incessantly makes Inquiry concerning its Beloved; diligently seeks him in all Places; sends out Messengers after him; doubles, and redoubles Prayers and Sollicitations; has a Multitude of Thoughts, and Stratagems; rises up all of a sudden, opens for him the Door, and runs out, yea even in the Night-season; saying, *I will rise now and go about the City in the Streets, and in the publick Places I will seek him whom my Soul loveth*; and confessing to every one, viz. *I am sick of Love*, and describing the Person of the Beloved by his Perfections and Beauties. Neither will it so let him go, or ever cease the Search; because Love is absolutely for possessing that which it coveteth.

But, alas! how *Passionate* soever my Soul may be in the Quest after thee; yet is she very *Weak* for certain, to seek thee after such a manner in the *City* of this World; and to traverse the *Streets* thereof to find thee, who art never to be found by going out, but by staying *within*. Therefore I sought thee, but I found thee not: I sought thee abroad in all the Creatures, in a thousand Places, where thou art not; while I should have sought thee at Home, in that inmost Ground of my Heart, which first bid me *seek thee*. And because I sought thee also in my own Activity, and after my own Thoughts and Reasonings, it was impossible for me ever to find thee. O shew me where thou wilt be found: And lead me accordingly, for thy Name's sake; that so I may not miss of thee, dear LORD, and be disappointed of seeing thy Face.

Draw me therefore, that I may begin fervently to run after thee. Need have I, absolute need, of thy Drawing and Attraction; yea, even of a strong Attraction too. For unless thou drawest, none cometh: Except thou attractest, none followeth; because that every one is bowed down to himself. By Nature, O Lord, I am bowed greatly down to my self: and am chained as it were to the Earth.

If thou drawest, lo! I come: Lo, I hasten, I run, I am on fire. But if not, neither do I run: Nor do I seek; nay, hardly do I *desire* to follow. Without thee I can do nothing: But if thou givest me thy Hand, then nothing shall be too hard for me. O give me thy Hand, Lord: So much the more swiftly do I *run*, as thou more strongly shalt *Draw* me.

Hark! The Voice of my Beloved drawing me!
 XIV. *Beloved.* "When I shall be lifted
 Joh. xii. up from the Earth, I will draw all unto
 "me; even unto *my self*."

Philoth. Good JESU! Draw me after thee; and not I alone, but all of us *will run after thee*, even because of the *Savour of thy good Ointments*. In the first place therefore draw thou me, even me, unworthy me, after thee: And then may others also follow, seeing the good Example of my Life; through thy Grace shed forth into me. But that we may not be proud, it is good for us once and always to be thoroughly sensible, how that we began not in our own Strength, but in the *Savour of thy Ointments*, to run this Race: This is the Divine Drawing, without which none doth proceed: As neither doth any one without it begin, according as thou likewise hast said:

Beloved. "No Man can come to me, except the Father draw him."
 Joh. vi.

Philoth. Whomsoever the Father draweth, he then followeth thee, and forsaketh himself. Well did he seem to be drawn, who said, *Master, I will follow thee whither-*

whithersoever thou goest. But it is not for all so to be affected towards thee : Nor is it the part of a *little* Soul, to be thus ready to follow thee in all things.

XV. *Theoph.* What hinders thee, my Soul, that thou quittest not all things for JESUS? Why so unwillingly art thou separated from vain and perishing things ! What do these things thou seeest help thee ?

Lo, as thou passest forward through the Mortal and Visible Creatures, and seekest in them Contentment, thou losest unavoidably the *better* things.

Thou dividest thy self from the Sovereign Good, whenever thou dost this ; and turnest away thy self from the true and blessed Life which is Everlasting.

Wherefore miserable and most unhappy shalt thou abide ; full of Dolours and Anxieties. Since whithersoever thou disposest to turn thy self, thou shalt always find Pains, Wearisomness and Vexation in abundance, tired in every thing, and perpetually frustrated ; till thou shalt be turned again to thy Creator : Because he, even he alone, is thy Peace, and thy only secure Rest.

However, if in Earthly Things thou shalt make no stay, neither fix thy Foot in the Mire ; but shalt rather consider, and reverence in the Glass of the Creatures, not the Image which passeth, but HIM whose Image and Superscription it is ; blessed shalt thou be, and shalt not die.

For when thou seekest, and beholdest, the Visibles of this whole Creation, not to possess or enjoy, but to bless and magnifie GOD ; thou beholdest in them the Name of thy Creator, fashioning to thy self out of his highest and lowest Works a sort of Ladder, which may be a help for thee to lean on in getting upwards : And then shalt thou also be set free effectually from the most accursed Birdlime of this World ; and, being fully thence disentangled, shalt very intimately be coupled with thy desired End ; which is GOD *above All Blessed for ever.* Amen.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the Union of the Soul with GOD : And of the withdrawing of His Grace.

Philothea and Theophilus.

Philoth. † *My Soul hangeth upon THEE, Psal. lxxiii. 9.*

I. *Theoph.* **M**Y God, my true Comforter, leave me not; thou knowest that I am not weary of thee: But that I am willing and glad daily, hourly to speak with thee in secret, even in my secret Chamber.

But where shall I search thee out, if peradventure I should lose thee for an Hour? Who shall bring me unto thee?

Thou art GOD above All; I, among thy *Lower Works*, a little contemptible diminutive thing of a Man: Or rather a Worm and no Man. Thou art in Heaven; and I in the World: Thou alone art the most High, and I am made most Low: Thou art the King of Glory, having the Riches of the whole Universe; but I a poor outcast Beggar. Who hath measured ever the Distance of Heaven and Earth? What bold Astronomer hath been able ever to reach with his Glasses the utmost Circumference of the Heavens; or to calculate the Number of Leagues from hence thither? They are exceeding far distant indeed one from the other; yet not near so far as thou from me. Who is it therefore that shall *Unite* me to thee? Oh! Who?

† *Adhæsit Anima mea post Te. V. L.*

Either thou must do it thy self, or none can. Nevertheless, if thou but wilt, it shall most speedily be done.

But known unto Thee it is, how great a Proclivity there is in my Nature to fall: For of my self I cannot but fall; but of thee, and from thee, Power is given to stand; nor only to stand, but also to go forward.

And hence it is my Soul depends on the Condescension, or Vouchsafement, of thy Spirit; and on the Infusion, or Inspiration, of thy Saving Grace. Whenever thou biddest, she shall be *lifted up* from the Earth: But whenever thou turnest thy Face but aside, she shall be *cast down* in her self; and Trouble shall seize her as a strong Earthquake.

Yet because of thy Charity, and thy Meekness, thou, Lord, shalt take me up, and thy right Hand shall wonderfully lead me to thy self.

II. *Philoth.* Give Ear now all ye Inhabitants of the Earth; hear this, and ponder it all ye Children of Men; that it is possible, yea most easie, with GOD for that to be fulfilled which is written, *viz. * The Rich and Poor [are] together in One.* Poor am I, and want All Things: Rich is He; wanting Nothing, and filling All Things.

Now that the Soul may be *United* with God, or made *One* with Him through Grace; tho' I have no *Experience* my self that is great in this kind, yet I have however a faithful *Testimony*, whereby I can prove it, which is this: *My Beloved is mine, and I am his, who feedeth among the Lilies.* Cant. ii. This is the Testimony of the two espoused Friends, the Bridegroom and the Bride: And is out of the *Old Testament* a most suitable and valid one, which of its self alone is sufficient. And the second is like unto

* *Simul in unum dives & pauper.* V.L.

John xvii. it, which is taken out of the *New: Father,*
I will that they all may be One, as we are One.

Lo! these are the undeniable and irrefragable Testimonies of Truth, the most bright Evidences out of both the Testaments; from which it is demonstrable, that the Soul of Man may familiarly be *conjoyn'd* with GOD, according to the Grace bestow'd on him from Above.

This near and familiar Conjunction, if it be Rare, and hard to be Obtained, is however doubtless of most exceeding Worth; even such as will infinitely more than make amends for all that can be done or suffer'd for its sake. It may be Rare, but yet it is not Unknown to the Loving Soul; Difficult, but yet not altogether Impossible; or if with Man Impossible, yet not with God. Whom therefore God hath so joyned together, and even with Himself, let no Man dare to put asunder: Let no Man once presume to disturb such a Soul that *hangeth upon* her Beloved.

If thou standest yet astonished at the Vouchsafement of *this Union*, let Astonishment and Amazement rather fall upon thee, and great Wonderment strike thee through and through, at the *singular Union* in his Assumption of the Humanity, which is the very Ground of this; and at the exceeding Excellence of his Goodness towards Man therein.

Let him do with thee whatsoever he then pleaseth. It sufficeth that he is *joined* to thee, and thou to him. If thou seekest after *Merit*, thou shalt find in it the *good Pleasure* of his Will; for herein alone it is contained. All is of Grace; all is of Good Will: Lay this to thine Heart; and be thou deeply Humble. It is lawful surely for him to do as he willeth; who alone doth great Wonders, and whose Grace
 Ps. cxxxvi. endureth for ever. Let thy Heart cleave to Him only, and to his Will; So shalt thou sit under his Shadow,

III. O sweet Society with Christ, and Fellowship most delightful under the Wings of Christ! O Gracious Conjunction, full of Love, and of the Sweetness of the Holy Ghost: Which is better felt than spoken!

Theoph. Sweet Society, sweet Fellowship indeed, and Communion unutterable! But this, I perceive, belongs not but to the Soul that hath estranged and alienated her self from all Earthly Things; whom the Love of this present Life holdeth not Captive, nor depresseth Earthward:

*But leaving the base sordid Earth below,
Does into God's own Mansion silent flow.*

But, alas! so much the more known as this is to the Lover, so much obscurer still is it to me, who am not yet arrived to that State. Nevertheless I would gladly be present, methinks, at such an Interview as this; when he useth to visit a devout Soul, and to favour her with some of his more special Communications. Willingly would I make one of the Company, though at a distance, when it is well with such a Soul.

And is it well with her, while she is with the Bridegroom at Noon.

Philoth. It is truly well with her. It is well, if she has found where he feeds, and makes his sacred Flock to rest at Noon. But then it is also ill with her, yea mighty ill, if it should happen that JESUS should absent himself; if the sweet Odours of his Grace should cease to flow; if the Holy Writings should not relish so to her, as before; if she grow tired, and be not able to bear either Contemplation or Meditation; if the Mists of her Heart arise very thick, and crowd in upon her, and noxious Thoughts so prevail against her, as there is hardly any suppressing of them; but that

that they seem as if they would at once quite overturn all the former Good Things and Graces. *Ah my Lord!*

IV. At which Words there fell of a sudden, as it were a dark Mist: And in the Mist the Beloved hid himself from the faithful Soul, so that she lost the sight of him: And thus even at Noon-day, it was Darknes with her; and as she felt about after him she cried, *Ah, my Lord!* But he answered her not. And great Dread and Pity hereupon seized on me: And my Heart was opened; and I could not forbear speaking, or even crying out vehemently after this manner.

Theoph. O Lord God, what is it thou here dost! Why dost thou so, Lord? What a strange Sport is this? O JESU! Kind, Gracious, Pitiful JESU! What is it thou designest by this Fact of Thine? O What meanest thou hereby!

If it would not displease thee, I could well wish, methinks, to have yet some Colloquy and Conversation with Thee, and this thy Beloved Soul and Spouse. Since she always, and with all Prayer and Supplication seeks thy Gracious Presence, that she may be cherished from thee with Chaste and Holy Delights, Lord, I admire why thou sufferest her sometimes to sit thus desolate, as she now appears to be. For as if it were not she that had so earnestly sought thee out, but another; thou passest by, and departest, taking no notice of her

And she is Groaning alone by her self. Lo! how she sitteth, as one quite forlorn; while her solitary Sighs ascend continually after thee. For it seemeth to be her Voice which I hear.

Philoth. With my Soul have I desired Thee in the Night, [Isai. xxvi.]

Theoph. It is Night with her, when thou the true Light art not present. She prayeth therefore for thy Presence,

Presence, that so the Darknes may not comprehend her; meaning the Darknes of Sin, which she extremely dreads, and is now afraid of being laid hold on thereby. And many, sure, are the Inconveniences which she now feeleth; the Grace of thy Visitation being thus withdrawn from her. For unless she were under some Suffering, at this present, never would she so desirously and ardently have cried after thee. But, hark! Surely 'tis she, or some other like her that crieth out again.

Phil. *My Soul hath hanged upon Thee, [Psal. lxxiii.]*

Theoph. She is in great distress, I see. These strong Cries shew an exceeding Weight of Trouble: But I do not think that any Trouble or Painfulness, either is or can seem so troublesome or painful to her, as to want her Lord's Presence.

V. And it is not to be wonder'd at, if out of this Want also the amorous Soul do fall as it were into a certain Languishment of Heart, as just ready to Swoon away. For so accordingly the Soul seemed here to faint away, as she was striving to grasp the Beloved, but could not.

For thou art sometimes difficultly found; and when at last thou art found, she is glad of thy Return, and hopes thenceforth to lead a Joyful Time with thee; promising her self, that thou wilt now never leave her more: And so being nothing, or very little, suspicious of thy withdrawing again, she apprehends nothing that is Sad or Melancholy. But thou often, as not minding, but as doing somewhat else, dost silently take thy flight. For thou slippest suddenly away out of her hands, she not having the least Thought or Surmise of any such matter.

I praise thee: In this yet how shall I praise thee? If there be any Praise, or if there be any Sweetness, which thou hast, why seemest thou to lose it by this Fact.

Were

Were it any other besides Thee, besides Thee alone, it might perhaps beget Scandal to her. But never, never can she be scandalized in Thee, never can she be offended in Thee, of whom she knows her self to be so strongly loved.

If therefore thou dost figure out somewhat by such a Teaching as this, which to us may be made to appear both Just and Rational, shew it unto me, I beseech thee, O GOD. For fain would I understand it; Nor do I judge it useless, if but to know a little hereof. Thy hidden Judgments no Man, of himself, can penetrate, or look into: But it is thy Light, which illustrates the things which are Obscure, and which dispels those which are Noxious.

VI. Why therefore is it that thou withdrawest thy self sometimes so hiddenly from the Soul, while she even remains ignorant of it? Lovest thou her, or no? If thou lovest, why fleest thou, my Beloved? If thou lovest not, why hast thou visited heretofore? And if thou lovest not *now*, why then returnest thou again, and knockest at the Door, and entrest in?

Whence is it that thou goest so in and out? Can there be any Fickleness with thee, or any manner of Lightness, in this thy Going and Coming after such a rate? Far be it for me to think so, Lord. Who shall attribute Folly to God; or say, that Inconstancy is with the Everlasting One? Is the Almighty as Man, that he should change? No: O Lord my God, thou art the *same* from Everlasting to Everlasting; and with thee is no Shadow of Change. But whence then cometh this most gloomy and dark Scene? Lovest thou her not still, as at the first? Yea, Lord, I know that thou lovest her.

But it is no light matter to her, to see this frequent Changing; as if thou would'st put on, at least, a Semblance of Lightness, after the manner of a Man. Yea, there arises in her hence no little Disorder and Confusion,

fusion, while thou appearest thus as one estranged from her. And perhaps her Complaint might have been less, hadst thou plainly told her, *I go away, and come again: And thine Heart shall rejoice; and thy Joy none shall take from thee.* John xiv. xvi.

Now no such Saying as this cometh from thy precious Mouth. Only she calleth to mind that Word which is written, the Truth whereof she experienceth, *But JESUS hid himself, and went out of the Temple.* John viii.

I have therefore against thee a few things: But this my Complaining springeth but out of a good Root. For only do I desire humbly to be instructed; not impatiently to contend. And do thou therefore graciously vouchsafe to give me an Answer, when, and as it shall be convenient. Also for the better Understanding, and Clearing up of this whole Matter, let the devout Soul speak somewhat for her self.

VII. And do thou bear freely thy Part in answering, O Faithful and Beloved Soul. Yea, speak thou *freely*, I say, unto the Beloved: For though he *hideth* himself, yet will he hear thee; and when he appeareth again, then shalt thou understand the Reason hereof, and thy Heart shall exceedingly rejoice.

And here *Theophilus* very tenderly addressed himself to the now Disconsolate *Philothea*, pressing her much to be Free, and to open her Mind with Clearness. For (continued he) the Beloved will patiently hear thee, and will meet thee doubtless with Words of Peace, that thou may'st be sure to suffer no Loss. And who is it that shall Comfort thee, if he thy Beloved shall not be himself the Comforter? Or thine Infirmary who shall bear, but he, that without being burthen'd, bears and supports all things? Is there any one that can or will deal *better* with thee than He, that is the GOOD above all that is Good; and even *thy Good* too? Who is it, thinkest thou, shall treat thee with more of Mildness

ness and Clemency, than He that is sovereign Clemency it self? To whom also canst thou more safely reveal and communicate whatever there may happen to lay upon and depress thy Mind; than to him who knoweth all things fully? And to whom canst thou give more Credit, than to Him, who is the *Faithful* One? Or whom woud'st thou trust in the first place, if not the very TRUTH, which never deceiveth, neither can deceive any Man?

Now if any Stranger, or mere Outward and Formal Professor, should over-hear what we are now Discoursing, it were far better that he should depart. Nay, whoever is not of the Friends of the Bridegroom, ought to be driven indeed from the Doors, while we are together in this secret Conference and Communion. Nevertheless, if there be any one who hath a Love to the Bridegroom, any one that shall be found Faithful and Discreet, any one that is Devout and Internal, let such have here free Admission and Ingress.

If any one be a Keeper of Integrity, and Preserver of Conscience; if a Lover of Virtue and of Discipline; if in Affection pure, and in Understanding clear-sighted; if in himself Humble and Meek, and towards others Compassionate and Charitable; if he hath learnt neither to take the good things he heareth in an ill Sense, nor to bring them out vainly, nor to dispute about them rashly, nor to defend them passionately, nor to publish them proudly; but on the contrary, if he knoweth how to receive modestly those that are Understood, to reverence duly those that are not Understood, and to Interpret soundly the Obscure and the Mystical: Such an one may very well be introduced, and may most freely assist at this Conference of ours.

Now shew me, O Soul, how thou dost uphold thy self in the Absence of the Beloved, and in the Withdrawings or Hidings of his Grace: No matter for Words here, or for Accuracy of Expression. For not
so

so much the Words themselves, as the Affection of the Heart, out of the *Sounding* forth of the same, ought herein for certain to be weighed. Tell me then, dear Soul, how bearest thou up thy self? As for my own self, I feel it would be no easie Matter for me to suffer thus, if he should keep himself long away. Indeed I should hardly take it well: I speak my Mind in this plainly. And I cannot but also think much the same concerning thee. If yet thou wilt, let us sit our selves here down, and let us confer together upon this Matter, for somewhat of mutual Consolation and Edification to us both.

C H A P. XV.

The Soul's Sadness for the Absence of her Beloved.

A Conference betwixt *Theophilus* and *Philothæa*, about the retiring and return of the Bridegroom.

Philothæa.

* *My Soul slumbereth for very Heaviness, P̄sal. cxix.*

Theoph. **W**Hat manner of Speech is this, which I hear, What sayest thou, O *Sion*? Wherefore art thou thus dull; and cast down, as it were among the Dead? Why sayest thou, the LORD hath forsaken me? Fear not, Daughter of *Sion*, thou Loving and Contemplative Soul: Behold, thy King, the Beloved of the Beloved, is coming unto thee. Arise: Stand up; look about thee; and behold the Joy that cometh unto thee from thy God.

Philoth. *I have sought him; but I cannot find him: I have called him; but he giveth me no Answer. And*

* *Dormitavit anima mea præ tedio. V. L.*

therefore *slumbereth my Soul*, and even melteth away, for Heaviness.

Then said I within my self, hearing these her bitter Complaints: "This is the Voice of the Turtle that has lost her Mate. It is not to Day, as it was Yesterday, or the Day before, when thou didst sing Songs of Joy.

Philoth. The Morning is passed; the Evening cometh, the Bridegroom lieth down *at Noon-tide*; yet is it not allowed me to approach him.

And I spake to her, and said:

Theoph. Thy Words express Sorrow and Sadness: And thine Eyes, I see, are water'd with Tears. O Soul! Thou art in Grief, and hast need to be comforted. Pray tell me, whence doth it arise?

Philothea hereupon made a shift to answer, and sighing declared, as follows. It is not a Concern about Gold or Silver, or any Worldly thing, that doth trouble me. No, nothing of all that is in the World. Neither Loss, nor Gain, affect me at all. Neither Injury nor Penury disturb my Rest. I stand indifferent to one and to the other; unmolested by all whatever is without. I matter not in the least the whole World, I say, together with all that is in it, or can even be imagined to be in it: For I am not of the World; but am dead and crucified unto it.

Here making a Pause, I looked earnestly upon her, saying, *viz.*

Theoph. If I know thee well, thou hast a long while renounc'd all that is of the *World*. But give me leave also to ask of thee, whether thou hast in every thing so perfectly renounc'd and deny'd *thy self*: And whether thou art also so far arriv'd, as even to abhor, and condemn this dear *Self* of thine? This is what is of thee specially required; but which very few ever reach to.

Philoth. Then she: O LORD, Righteousness truly belongs unto thee; but even unto me Confusion of Face, with deep Sorrow, as at this Day. For, behold! I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I am vile: Therefore do I ever abhor and despise my self in thy Sight. And on this account have I nothing to lose; since I have accounted it the greatest Favour of thy Grace to rid me of my *Self*, so as I might have *no self*.

Theoph. Whence is then thy Grief? What hast thou lost?

Philoth. Oh! That it were but all the World! Oh; that it were but all this my vile self! O that it were any thing, or all things, but *One*; even that *ONE*, which my Soul loveth.

Theoph. If it is the loss of thy Beloved thou so lamentest, dear Soul, I must needs confess that Sorrow hath not undeservedly fill'd thy Heart. Nor can any thing be pleasant to thee, till he return, and cause again his Face to shine upon thee. But how in the mean while is it with thee? How holdest thou up, and sinkest not quite, O thou that art so delicate and so tender; and that leanest so on the Beloved, as without him not to take so much as one single Step? This I would gladly know; for it is evident to me also, that he is not always present, when he is wished and waited for. Therefore while he is absent, what Ease hast thou, (if thou hast any) and wherein dost thou quiet thy self? I shall reckon it a special Favour, if thou please but to communicate to me thy Secrets, as to this Matter, how ever dolorous and melancholy they may happen to be.

No body will think it strange that thou shouldest grieve for an *Absent Christ*, unless such an one as is void altogether of Love. Thou art in Sadness at present; but it is for the Bridegroom Christ, not for this World. And I know, that when he shall return, thou shalt again be comforted; since he will not always

forget thee. For he hath said: *I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.*
 John xiv.

Wherefore thy Words are no empty Words; no dead insignificant Words are they, which with so piercing Grief are utter'd; but do at once demonstrate the Lover's Affection, and strike the *Frozen Heart*, which is not set on *Fire* with the Love of CHRIST. For thy Voice is sweet: It is the Voice of the Turtle; not a clamorous Muttering. Hence I am confident, thou shalt not fail to find him, whom thou mournest after as lost.

II. Yet fain would I interrogate thee a little, if thou pleasest; concerning this mournful Occasion. What sayest thou of him, whom absent thou bewailest? Is he Good, or hast thou a Suspicion to the contrary?

Philoth. Good indeed he is; and most exceedingly Good: Righteous, and Faithful, in whom there is not any the least Iniquity, neither can there be.

Theoph. If he be so Good, so very Good, and there be in him no Evil at all, why is it then thou grievest?

Philoth. For him that is Good I grieve not: For because he is Good, therefore need I not to grieve. But I mourn for my self, Wretch that I am; because I have lost a Good and a Faithful Friend, so Good an one, so Faithful an one, as to contain in himself an Ocean-Spring of all Goodness and Faithfulness. It is I, even I it is, that have merited this: Alas! my own Fault alone it is, and no others. Wherefore, Wo! Wo! Because I was not so solicitous as I ought to have been in keeping his Grace. By *losing* I have now learnt what once by *having* I possess'd: The *Absence* of the Beloved doth now convince how advantageous his *Presence* was. I rejoiced with him, and was pleasant in his Company; but was little apprehensive, or cautious, concerning his so swift Departure.

He came skipping on the Mountains; merry and pleasant was he in the Gates of my House. And presently hereupon I shut the Doors of the Flesh, and brought in the Beloved to me, even into my secret Chamber did I bring him: And I sat with him, and rested within under his Shadow, safe from the Whirlwind and the Tempest. Then was I glad, yea full of Gladness, that I had the Sight of the Beloved.

And why should I not be glad, seeing that he is my Gladness, my Joy, and the Exultation of my Heart? Ah, what have I had, and what possessed I in that Hour! It is not possible for me to tell thee, how well it was with me: Neither is at this time indeed expedient so to do. Nothing could I desire more, he being present, whom alone I loved.

O how much loved I him, when I neglected my self and all things beside! I was little or nothing careful about any thing whatever which could delight me; for his Love ravished me quite, enflamed me throughout, possessed me whole: And whatsoever he was not, did seem to me altogether insipid.

But he being taken away, I am in a manner clean out of Heart; yea my Heart is even as it were cast away out of my self. For my Soul depended on his Grace merely and solely; because I had no other Comfort besides him, whose Absence I do at this time lament. O how was I ravished with the Love of him! And all that was not my Beloved, how did I even despise and loath, in Comparison of this my Well-beloved, as most unsuitable and unsavory! For he, and none but he, could any wise content me: All was flat besides; exceeding flat to my Palate. I could not in a Word desire more than I had, while he was with me whom my Heart loved.

He did suffice me, and was enough for all the Variety of Joy and Mirth. What I would, the same still would he also: And everything that he did com-

mand me, I did willingly accept, and did give my self to him wholly and readily. And there was a good Agreement, and great Tranquillity between us.

Nor did any one dare to break in upon, or to interrupt our Silence; he so commanding by his own

Mouth: [Beloved,] "*I adjure you, O ye Cant. ii. " Daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes, and by " the Hinds of the Field, that ye stir not up, nor awake " my Love, till she please.*

Now then, consider thoroughly, if thou beest able to have any feeling of my Words, how much Reason there is for me to grieve for the Absence of the Beloved; through whose Presence I began to abound with all good things, and to be enriched with all Graces and Loveliness.

To these Things I answered:

Theoph. I know what thou speakest; I have my self likewise experimented more than once what thou sayest. But in this let us be comforted, that the Dispensation of his Will is the Proficiency of our Devotion.

And now all, what thou hast hitherto said, I have taken in very good part, and return my hearty Thanks: But would yet fain be more perfectly instructed of these Matters from thy Mouth; and would more thoroughly have them beaten into mine Head. For to such as are dull of Apprehension there is need of a more particular and circumstantial Declaration.

C H A P. XVI.

A Scrutiny concerning the BELOVED, and the Gifts of his Grace.

Philothea and *Theophilus* continue their Conference; and *Philothea* gives a large Account of the Conduct of the Divine Spirit in the Spiritual Warfare.

Philothea.

Blessed be G O D, who hath not turned his Mercy from me, Psal. lxxvi.

I. *Theoph.* **I** Am here met again, with a Design to inquire of thee farther, for my better Assistance in the Course of true Piety, if at any time the Beloved leave thee without inward Consolation, what thou dost in the mean time? What also thou would'st advise in this Matter to be done? And by what Art or Method, he may be reconciled and called back?

Of all Friendship, I beseech thee, O dearest and devout Spouse of Christ, not to be silent, or to keep from me any of those things which I am now coming to question thee about. On this Account, and at this time, thou may'st be not a little serviceable, by disclosing to such an one as I am what thou feelest, or perceivest, in thy Breast. For by what thou shalt declare, I shall be made capable of both measuring the Weight of my own Grief, and sounding the Ground thereof; so as to determine how far I am in the right or wrong, when my Heart is pensive, and even ready to break through Desire.

Forasmuch as sometimes then I have seen thee cheerful, but at other times melancholy; and by and by have

beheld thee again rejoicing: Hence by thee I have diligently weighed my self, and by thy Case for a while have pondered my own.

Now I judge the chiefest, if not only, Cause of this Alteration in thee, to be the going and coming again of thine Only Beloved. In which Case, understanding that thou hast run through very many things, I am come hither to thee to be informed.

II. At this she presently expressed her Readiness to answer my Desire, and satisfie me as well as she could, concerning these various Vicissitudes which the Soul passes through, with respect to the Beloved, when absent or present: Saying,

Philoth. Yielding to thy urgent Desires, I shall at least then endeavour to discover (if not altogether, yet) in some good measure, such things as are transacted within me; whether it be when I am with the Beloved, or when as one that is weaned I remain alone, expecting him whom my Soul loveth.

Truly, this thou art to know in the first Place: That so much Joy and Sweetness as his Grace brings along with it, even so much Grief and Bitterness ministers his Absence to me. But why he acts with me after this manner, dispensing forth such a Variety of Changes and Turns; it might become him rather himself to say, than me.

And Him also thou shalt hear, when I shall have finished the Words of this my *Canticle*: For after that we will introduce him to us; and he sitting in the midst of us, shall then teach us his Ordination, and instruct us in the way of his Disposall, which it is his custom to use toward those that love him.

But now hear me in the mean while with Patience, I pray; and let not my imperfect or stammering Speech be grievous to thee. For to the mutual stirring up of our Hearts, and Excitement of our Spirits, are we now here met together: That we may either mourn together alike,

or that out of Love we may together rejoice. For *Wo to him that is alone* ; because when he falleth into melancholy, or into Temptation, there is not another to help him up. *Wo to the Soul that is alone*, when she falleth ; having no Companion to raise her up, or to comfort her.

Howbeit, if *Two* only be together, and alike sorted, they shall mutually cherish each other : While one of them is sad, the other suggesteth Consolation ; or if this be refused, as it happeneth not seldom, he immediately bringeth Compassion, and beginneth to be vehemently grieved over his Friend, even as it were over his own self. Nay, where the one refuseth altogether to be comforted, and even rejecteth with a sort of Indignation the Consolating Hand of the other ; this other leaveth him not therefore, but in all his Infirmary, and in all his Affliction, most tenderly sympathizeth with him. And so it cometh to pass, that either they both rejoice together ; or if Joy be removed, they will ease and comfort each other with mutual Tears.

And notwithstanding that Grief may yet abide in them, by reason of some Cause, that is very afflictive and sorrowful, they bear it at least together with much more Evenness of Mind : Because they find themselves so of * *One Heart*, as by the Change of things, or Circumstances, **Unicordes.* their Hearts can never be a whit changed or corrupted.

Who would not now say, beholding and considering such a faithful Concord of Minds, such a true and hearty Unanimity or *Oneness* of Heart : *Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, Brethren, to dwell together in ONE* : even in *Unity* of Heart and Spirit. Psal. cxxxiii.

III. I can therefore more freely tell thee what I my self do feel, with all Plainness, because I feel

feel from thee no manner of Guile, or Captiousness.

Lo! He my sweetest dearest Bridegroom, my most beloved and bosom Friend, my Lord JESUS CHRIST, the Lover of Holy Souls, being strongly touched with Love and not able to cease from it, attracted me, vile Wretch hereby to himself. And even when I was not, he gave me Being, Life, Understanding, and the Enjoyment of this common Light. Nor ceased he here, but conferred upon me moreover, through the Grace of Baptism, Power to be *Born again*; and clothed me upon with the Glory of his Merits: Even with the Robe of his precious Merits he adorned me; casting my Rags far away.

After this, when I had foolishly polluted and deformed my self with many Sins, and so was become unfit to render him Love for Love, he looked not on my Filthiness, but on the Bosom of his infinite Mercies. For he called me by his Grace, when I was straggling and wandring still farther and farther; not suffering me to perish in this Evil World.

Then provided he me after this a convenient Place to rest in, and pause as it were, so long as I am to be in this frail Body.

Notwithstanding this is not I know to be taken for the true Pause, or Rest of the Soul; neither is this Habitation as under the Shadow of the Beloved, however indeed desirable, a lasting one. That is the Soul's right Pause, true Rest, and lasting Peace, which after the Labours of this present Life do end, is by her perceived and enjoyed in her own true Native Country.

It is nevertheless in the mean while a sweet sort of Recreation to the Soul that is Sighing after God, to see her self unshackled and unfetter'd from the heavy Bonds of the World; and to be in such a place, where she may more fully serve the Beloved, and be at leisure

sure in secret silently to attend both her self and him. So it was, of a truth, to me: Nothing appeared to me more sweet and pleasant, than to attend the Society of my Beloved being disentangled from Worldly Cares and Objects.

IV. Neither was he wanting in divers of my Necessities and Troubles, which were of several Kinds; and specially in the first great Onsets and Temptations of the Enemy, which followed upon my Conversion, he was always with me, helping me and succouring me.

Frequently also he hath instructed me with Useful and Powerful Discourses, confirming me in his Words, which were Light to my Feet, and Melody to my Heart. He hath edified me oftentimes with profitable Sermons, and good Books: He hath, in speaking through them to my interior Ground and secret Life, enlightned my Understanding, quickned my Affection, and made ready my Heart to fulfil his Will. He confirmed his Truth: He established me in his Word.

And as new Plantations used to be water'd with Showers so likewise took he care to water me with Internal Consolations: Lest that Virtue, which was in me begun, should as a Potsheard dry away, and so become good for nought.

And he said to me: "If thou shalt be willing, and
" shalt hear me, then shalt thou see every good thing.
" If thou shalt do the things that I bid thee, then
" shalt thou be my Darling and my Love. If thou
" shalt choose me, and wilt love me above all things,
then shall there be granted unto thee from
my Father all whatever thou askest. " But Joh. xv.
" if thou shalt leave me, then look to it; for this
" thing shall be to thee a Stone of Stumbling, against
" which thou shalt dash thy self; and I will set my
" Zeal against thee. And when thou shalt seek
" after another Lover, he shall not long please thee;
" but

“ but shall be turned unto thee into Tediouſneſs and
 “ Bitterneſs ; for as much as I, even I alone,
 Joh. xiv. “ and no other, am the *Salvation and Life of*
 xi. “ *the Soul.*

And I turned me to him, who had done ſo much good to me, readily owning him for my only Benefactor : And ſhaking my ſelf from the Duſt of Earthly Affection, I purpoſed in my Heart to live the reſt of my Life wholly to him alone.

Thus then was I turned to Him from all Things beſides ; and my Reſolution was firſt in me to be none but His: For that nothing was, or could be, Better than He ; and nothing was, or could be, more Reaſonable, or every way more Advantageous and Salutary to me in my State, than this Paſt or Covenant, whereby I aſſign'd my ſelf over to Him.

V. Let others, who will, go and ſeek after whom they can Love, and whom they may make an offer of their Service to : As for me, I know moſt aſſuredly, that he is the *true Husband* of the Soul ; for whom it would not be hard for me, I think, to die ; that ſo I might but always abide in the Love of Him, and might hang faſt to, and ſubſiſt in Him, without fear of being ever parted more.

I adhered therefore to him, for he pleaſed me. Neither could I find any one that did pleaſe more, or that was on all accounts more Amiable, or indeed that was to be any ways Compared with Him : Now ſuch an one my Soul had moſt vehemently deſired and longed for, than whom none might be *Greater*, or *Better*, or *Worthier* ; and who might abound with all good things.

For as much now as he is exceeding Kind and Courteous, he proceeded to give me yet farther many Comforting and Encouraging Words ; with the utmoſt Care foreſeeing and providing, that his Sayings might not terrifie or break me, by reaſon of their
 being

being at any time too rough and harsh : But that they might, on the contrary, lay upon me, and sweetly tutor me in what was light and easie to be born ; that so hereby the Affection, being thus initiated, might be the better drawn, and the more strongly tend, toward the loved Object, without ever Recoiling back again.

“ Better (said he) will she be taught, and a greater
“ progress will she make, if not violently, but of her
“ own accord, she be stirred up and provoked. More
“ easily will she take *my Toke* upon her, if Love rather
“ invite by Rewards; than Fear affrighten by
“ Punishments. But if she shall need a driving, let
“ this yet be done with such a skilful Management,
“ as may best comport with her, and may not overwhelm
“ her through Excess.

For he knew what was Expedient for his new Plantation ; and of what Use and Benefit this Tenderneſs of his might hereafter prove to me ; and principally in the time of my Probation, which was at hand. For that I could hence easily recollect what great things he had in the beginning done for my Soul, and therefore might not faint in any Combat, but take Courage to proceed on in the Battel.

Neither would he presently discover to me, what and how great things I was to suffer in his Service : But now and then he intermingled Sorrowful Things with Joyful ; considering the Feebleness and Incapacity of the tender Shrub just springing up, till I should grow stronger, so as to be able to bear Hardships.

VI. After these things, he led me about, and taught me, and carried me on his Shoulders. He led me about through the sacred Writings ; and with an holy Gale, he armed me against the Devil's treacherous Attacks.

He propos'd to me the eminent Patterns and Exemplars of all Virtues, such as the holy Patriarchs and Prophets, with the Apostles and the Glorious Lights of the New Testament.

He led me about also through the places of the Desert, and the Tabernacles of *Egypt*, where he shew'd me multitudes of self-denying Souls, who in the earliest Days retir'd hither, continuing stedfast in the Apostle's Doctrine, all of one Heart and of one Spirit; calling nothing their own, but having all things common. By whose most holy Conversation and Communion, *Egypt* and *Israel* was made one; and the Wilderness changed into Paradise: Bearing, in great abundance, most lovely Plants of Righteousness; which brought forth all the Fruits of the Spirit, according to their Seasons.

He took me gently by the Hand, and led me up and down this new flourishing Paradise, where was a great Multitude, of several Ranks and Orders, of those that were Redeem'd out of the World, who followed him continually whithersoever he did go. O what a goodly Train was here to behold of glorious Martyrs, noble Confessors, faithful Pastors, enlightn'd Doctors! O most delightful Fountain of Gardens enclosed! where walk'd also holy Cœnobites and Anchorets, with undefiled Virgins, and those that made themselves Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.

He gave me to see these Flocks of his Companions, for my Encouragement and Consolation, whom he had gathered out of all his Tribes, in their several successive Generations: And seeing how they were Followers of Him in the Regeneration, and what they both did and suffer'd on his Account, and treading in his Steps, I was hereby very much animated to go.

For by this Cloud of Witnesses, that was thus set before me, I was convinced, that the Reproach of Christ

Christ was honourable, and his Burthen truly light. What also before did appear to me impossible, now by their Examples seemed to me very imitable: And they made it more than probable, that both the Yoak of the Lord was easie, and the Broad Way of the World bitter and deceitful. Thus was I carried about by him to the Beds of Spices, to feed with him in the Gardens: and giving me of the Honey-Comb with the Honey, he said to me, *Eat, O Friend*; and giving me of his Milk, mixed with Wine, he said, *Drink, yea, drink abundantly.*

He taught me likewise, as a tender Nurse doth her Nursling; yea, even as a Mother teacheth her little Child, so he instructed me; breaking for me the Spiritual Shells, and putting into my Mouth the Kernels, because they were sweet to feed on.

Trace out, if thou canst, my Friend, what these signifie, and where they may be found. Open thou the Code of the Apostolical Epistles, and casting thine Eyes attentively there, Read; if thou art able to conceive so great Mysteries: Turn over the Volume of the Prophet *Esaias*; look into the holy Gospel, that Light of all Lights, and see if they produce not out of them most pleasant and delicious Kernels.

Whatsoever from out of these thou shalt find, that is Obscure and Difficult to be understood, that is the Kernel in the Shell. But if thou shalt hear them expounded, and shall understand that which before thou wast not able, then is the Shell broken, and the Sweetness of the Kernel relisheth in the Heart. So is it in like manner with other subtil and ingenious Sayings. And hence canst thou behold even as many Nuts, as there are Latent or Mystical Senses.

VII. And how thinkest thou, prithee, that he *carried me on his Shoulders*? This he did as often as he beheld mine Infirmity, and considered my Weakness: Neither did he, for the sake of this, cast me from him; neither

neither did he despise me for it, or treat me in the least neglectfully, but with Patience and Long-suffering he still sustained me, and bore with me.

He carried me also on his Shoulders, when he hath given and inspired into others the Virtue of suffering my Infirmities and Follies; and of gently bearing all what was reprehensible in me.

He carried me yet much more dearly on his Shoulders, when *bearing his Cross*, he went forth into a Place, called the Place of a Skull, where also he was crucified. For it was more I that was there carried by him, than even the Cross it self.

And my Sins were Burthens far more grievous to his Shoulders, than was this Wood of the Cross: Since for me the Cross was born; not for himself. Yet deserves it however Honour for his sake, who both carried it, and dy'd on it.

VIII. O how much is He above All to be Loved and Reverenced, by whose Merit and Grace I was in such a manner Sought out and Redeemed! Therefore shall this my Beloved be of me loved, even as a Mother loveth her only Son.

I know, of a truth, that I am no wise agreeable, or suitable for his Love: But still I must say, that whatever Freedom I have herein presumed to take, it hath proceeded purely from his Vouchsafement, and amazing Condescension. The natural Consequent whereof was this, that while he treated me with such an humble and familiar Kindness, I was thereby strongly encourag'd and press'd, at turns, even to run into his Embraces, who courted me, and ran into mine.

It runs much in my Mind what *David* once said:

*Who am I, and what is my Life, that I should
be Son-in-law to a King?* But far, very far greater is this Affinity than that: Yea, there is no Comparison betwixt them. This is such a pure and sincere Relation, or rather Cognation, as wherein Flesh
and

and Blood have no place ; but unviolate Fealty, and the Answer of a good Conscience towards God. Of which also that Disciple, whom JESUS loved greatly, saith : *Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the World.* For *GOD is LOVE* : And Love begetteth this Cognation, and bringeth it forth.

Since therefore that *David* so much humbled himself, that he might become but the Son-in-law to an Earthly King ; how humble ought I to conceive and think of my self, that the Lord, the King of Kings, doth vouchsafe to take notice of such a vile despicable Beggar as I am, and one that had also *doted upon* other *Paramours*, defiling my self with them ; and thus to draw me, and invite me to the Love of him.

IX. He hath dealt with me therefore not according as I deserved ; but according to the unmeasurable Condescension of his Good Will and Gracious Power towards me ; as in all things it did seem meet to LOVE, and to his Infinite GOODNESS.

Happy and Blessed is that Soul, which with the Bond of Divine Love is bundled up, and knit together fast. How noble, how Honourable is she, that is not ignorant of this holy Tie ! O most high Nobility indeed !

Here she rested, as not being well able to proceed farther at this time, through the great Weight of Admiration which seized her : And after a little Pause, she address'd her self to me, in this manner concluding, And now, my Friend, since this Discourse concerning the Beloved is grown already to a greater Prolixity than first might be expected, and that hitherto the Narration has not been given of what was principally inquired after ; therefore we must Adjourn the rest to our next Meeting. Which may be blest to us, and vouchsafe to make both Pleasant and Fruitful.

Theoph. Amen.

C H A P. XVII.

Of the most Gracious Protection of the Beloved.

Philothea continues her Discourse, giving a Narration of what farther befel her in her Progress: And satisfies the Doubt which *Theophilus* had propos'd.

Philothea. Behold, as the Eyes of a Maiden are in the Hands of her Mistress: Even so mine Eyes wait always upon my beloved, *Psal.* cxxiii. 2.

FROM the Time that I first began to Love him, I was minded to Persevere with him. Which, when I had resolv'd upon, this matter pleas'd him much, and he confirm'd it, saying, *Whoever abideth in me, and I in him, beareth much Fruit.* But that a Trial hereof might the better be made, and Love might be prov'd with respect to me, and to my Pretensions; for discovering how True and Real, how Strong and Powerful, how Chast and Loyal, my Affection was; it was necessary that *Temptation* should open and disclose this. Now I could not be tempted, but as he should himself permit, and hide himself a little.

And because *Temptation* is wont to be very helpful to the Purification of the Interior Man, as likewise to the Fructification of Virtues in a more abundant measure, and the clearer Perception of Spiritual Gifts: it was permitted accordingly to the Tempter to lay hold on me. So he began to Exorcise me.

How mightily and how frequently I was tossed by him hither and thither, my God and my Lord, from whom no Secret is hid, most clearly knoweth; who is a Witness of all those things which were transacted

acted in my Heart. And to this very Hour he be- holdeth me, and considereth that I am nought but a frail Creature, and an Earthen Vessel.

II. Unless he therefore had come into my Assistance, when I was so anxiously troubled and weighed down, as I could hardly believe that it was possible for me to live: I say, unless he had been then my Help, *My Soul had almost dwelt in Hell*, or fallen into the Ditch of Despair.

But he had Mercy upon me, who accustometh to be present with such as are of a troubled Heart: For who could have been mighty enough to bear so many and great Temptations, without GOD protecting and succouring him?

That therefore I was able to stand before the Face of the Wind, and of the Storm, it was of Mercy. And that I yet know my self to stand hitherto, proceeds likewise from the same bounteous and compassionate Goodness.

Whence I ought not in any manner to trust to my self, so long as I live in the Flesh. Let the Heaven appear never so fair and serene, I dare not presume upon it; for there is no concluding that it shall therefore abide so for time to come. For the Air shall of a sudden be tempestuously stirred up, and perhaps then when it is least of all expected.

So much therefore is the Grace and Protection of my Beloved the more necessary, as I see that almost all things are constantly exposed to Perils and Dangers. No Place any where is safe, but in Heaven, where my Beloved feedeth his Followers in Joy and Exultation.

III. But Ah! when shall I come there? What can I say to it? Verily, Nothing. Think of it a little, possible I may; and that too not clearly: But enter. I can by no means. Oh, that he would come himself, and that he would place me in that most light- some, most safe, and most pleasant Pasture of his

Saints ; where Satan is not, and where no Evil hath Admittance !

Hitherto am I yet toiling in the Sea ; and whether or no I may ever be able to arrive at the Haven of Salvation, by reason of the manifold Temptations swelling against me from a contrary Blast stirred up ; I can no wise positively aver.

Nothing therefore, my good Friend, is secure with me : Nothing out of Danger. But this, however, still abideth my Shield, and my Covering, that I do always behold the Light of Faith ; that I do humbly seek for the Grace of my Beloved ; that I unweariably maintain a good Hope towards him ; that I am not any wise consenting to be separated in the least from the Love of him ; and lastly, that I leave my self more to his Providence and Abyssal Mercy, than to my own Industry.

Wherefore, although I may very frequently stumble, and even sometimes fall into open Vice, nevertheless I ought not for this at all to despair ; but I will instantly cry and groan unto him : “ O Lord my
“ God, have mercy upon my Soul, and suffer me
“ not to be overwhelmed in my Temptations ; but
“ help me faithfully, that I may powerfully resist
“ and gloriously overcome.

Also I cry, being tempted, “ Reach forth thy right
“ hand to the Work of thine hands : O reach it forth
“ to me thou who at this time triest me by Satan,
“ and who often settest me as on the left hand side.
“ O Lord Christ, make haste to help me ! Let not the
“ Floods, I beseech thee, swallow me up ; for in
“ thee have I trusted, O thou Deliverer of the Poor
“ and the Desolate.

But if that the Temptation should happen to be so grievous, which is no new thing, as even to hinder me from *calling out* upon the Lord, and expressing my Cries before his Sanctuary ; presently from the in-
most

most Depth of my Heart will I *sigh*. For he knoweth the very Secrets of the Heart, and understandeth what is the Mind of the Spirit, and what it desireth, and hiddenly intercedeth for. For as much as it is not his Will, that even one (yea the very least) of these *little ones* should perish, who believe in him. And therefore according to God, maketh the Spirit Intercession for these with hidden Groanings, *which cannot be uttered*, as by Experience I know full well.

IV. O how great was, and is, his Mercy towards me! How great, I say, his Mercy; that even then when I was ignorant of it, or did not heed it, he was still notwithstanding present with me in Tribulation! For many times he preserved me, that I might not be delivered over to the Passions. But sometimes again, out of his hidden Judgment, it so came to pass, that I should fall and be overcome even in small things, lest peradventure I might grow proud, and presume in great ones; and that being humbled and confounded I might learn that I was nothing, even when I thought I stood well, and was in a flourishing Condition.

I would advise and persuade thee therefore that thou do by no means rashly or suddenly praise me, however prosperously I may go *forward*; but reserve rather thy Praise for an Holy *End*: Be sure thou praise me not before; yea not *me*, even then, but the *Lord*, even the LORD only. O may the Glorious GOD alone be praised, alone be magnified, alone be extolled; who hath stood by me frequently, yea continually in my Temptations.

V. For oft times when I was seized on and taken Prisoner by them, he mercifully set me free. And sometimes as they were coming against me as a Whirlwind to scatter me altogether, he sent forth his Arrows and dispersed them; he multiplied his Lightnings, and confounded them.

And they departed from me, for a Season. For he would not that I should be without them altogether; as what rarely, if ever, is vouchsafed of him to any of the Saints in this Life.

After this therefore I had rest for a little while; my Beloved bestowing on me this Peace. Which nevertheless having obtained, I applied not my self hereupon either to Bodily, or Worldly Rest: But turned me to that which is of the Mind; that so I might from afar behold the Earth, and look a little into the Heavenly Sanctuary.

Also I was intent, that I might see and discover what manner of Person I was, and by what Ways and Measures I might be able to please him better, who shewed me so great Signs of Love, as vastly exceeded all what there was any ground in me to expect.

For I was not able in the Whirlwind of Temptation to see, how sweet my Beloved was, how pleasant, and how lovely; but in the Sereneness of my Mind, and in the Quiet of Solitude I was now at liberty to see and reflect.

And as much as did lie in me, I did wish for this Serenity of Peace without Intermission, that so I might more perfectly adhere to him, and without any Hindrance or Trouble silently wait on him.

VI. But not according to the Desire of the Soul, doth the Effect of Grace always accompany. Sometimes yet the Sweetness desired is given; but then sometimes too the same is delayed very rightly.

Yet who would not rather chuse to lie and rest under the Shadow of the Beloved; if it were but permitted, and if Time and Place would so admit?

And now again my Beloved operateth with me, at certain times, as afore time. Neither do I feel always that which troubleth; nor do I enjoy uncessantly that which delighteth; but *the Evening and the Morning* is to me made *one Day*; forasmuch as this whole

whole Mortal Life is nought but a Flux and Reflux of Good and Evil, Light and Darknes, Day and Night: And is passed away in coming and going through Joy and Sorrow, Prosperity and Adversity, Delight and Pain. This plainly was felt by that Saint who said, *Thou visitest him early in the Morning, and the next Moment thou triest him.* And therefore he could not forbear crying out, *What is Man that thou, O LORD, shouldest magnifie him: And that thou shouldest set thy Heart thus upon him?* Job.vii.

Accordingly then he set his Heart on me, to visit me graciously in the Morning, and after that immediately to Try me. When I well nigh cried, how long wilt thou let me alone, till I swallow down my Spittle? But he turned, and comforted me again with the Visitation of his Love; whereat I was revived greatly, for the present, till new Trials and Temptations succeeded. For which also I was hereby strengthen'd, and my Spirit was much encouraged to go forward still.

Nay, it seemeth even some sort of Rest, if the Temptation be not too continual, or over vehement and importunate. So soon therefore as it was granted me to rest in the Beloved for never so little a time, I was instantly full of Satisfaction and Delight. And whenever leave shall be given me sweetly to repose my self in him, I have then what I wished for, and all is exceeding well. In this I rejoyce; and always shall rejoyce for so Divine a Gift, by which the Soul is transformed, and cometh to be after a manner Divine.

VII. Moreover, it is no small Advantage to have the Liberty and Confidence of discoursing him, or addressing to him, upon any Occasion that may present it self; for which hereby he giveth sufficient Encouragement to the Soul. For by his so often freely pre-

venting me with his Gracious Visitation, I got a Familiarity of speaking to him, and telling him whatever I had a mind for, or need of.

Farthermore as to the Operations of these Visits from the Beloved, know that when he approacheth, and is minded to keep holy Day with me, immediately there shineth a Light into my Heart; before the Brightness of which the Mistiness of all vain Thoughts is scattered, and driven away, and the long wished for Serenity is possessed.

For wherever he maketh his Entrance nothing filthy, nothing indecorous can stand; since he is the Lover and the Engrafter of Cleanness. This I found most true: And that it was necessary so soon as he enter'd, for every Illusion of the Devil, with all the Poms of the World, to depart forthwith. My Passions thus being suppressed, and my Temptations which I suffered now overcome; I began both more evidently to know, and more fervently to love him. I studied likewise more heartily to give him Thanks, for that at length he had vouchsafed to deliver me from the Uproar of my Domestick Enemies, and to keep me from the Tumult and the Hurry of Vices. For these are they that disquiet my Peace, and would shut up my Mouth, that I speak not to my Beloved.

But in vain is their striving against the Power and Wisdom of him, who in the midst of every Tumult, can in a Moment slide into my Heart, and silently infuse into it his Secrets: So that all their Whisperings and Buzzings I make no reckoning of at all, yea I do not so much as think them worth my Notice.

VIII. O my most Heart-endear'd and fairest Beloved, so, even so I beseech thee take me unto thy self, even to thy nearer Visits and Favours; as often as thou shalt see my Affections to be pressed down with any Weight of Sin, or detained with any unnecessary Business, or vain useles Employ: That so I may not
begin

begin to wander after the Flocks of evil Cogitations, and thereby all of a sudden be deprived of thy Grace; without which I shall not be able to continue in thy most unparallel'd Friendship.

For thou art my Lord and my God, who healest and hallowest, all things by thy Word; who hast appointed my Soul for Life, and established my Feet that they should not be greatly moved: And who hast delivered me from the Evil Hour, and hast pulled me out from the Snares of Death, when I was caught by them.

O how many have been forsaken, and are lost, who were more guiltless than I am! But thou, Lord, hast given Commandment to save me, who art my Rock and my Fortress for ever.

Bless therefore the LORD, O my Soul: And all that is within me bless his holy Name. Bless the LORD, O my Soul: And forget not all his Benefits. All is short, all is exceeding short, whatsoever thou shalt say, or think, or even propose, in Praise of him. For greater is he than all Praise; and sweeter than all Melody.

Therefore my Soul cleaveth unto thee, Lord, alone: And loveth thee beyond all things thou hast given; though what thou sentest me out of Charity and Affection, ought more than ordinarily to be esteemed and valued of me, as well for its own intrinsick Worth, as for the most high Excellence of the Giver. O how hast thou satisfied me many a time, from my Youth up, even until now, with good and beautiful things! And how hast thou crowned me with thy Loving Kindness, and thy most sweet tender Mercies, as in the Days of old! But how short, yea how short, are all these of thee thy self?

For thou *alone* art the Bridegroom: The rest are Presents and Love-Tokens. I will not love them instead of thee: Neither will I believe that all these

put together, can be sufficient to satisfy me without thee; lest I should hereby at once lose both *them* and *thee*.

Thou permittest to *use* many things for the *sake* of thee: But thou allowest not to *enjoy* any in the *stead* of thee.

Hence, O my Beloved, my Bridegroom, my Saviour, sweetest JESU, I have preferr'd thee before all, and have taken care to love thee beyond all. Grant therefore, that through thy Grace I may arrive happily to enjoy thee: And in the true fruitive Union may together with thee be perpetually blessed and glorified.

IX. But whither have I run? (said she, here recollecting her self again.) Perhaps I may have been too tedious for thee, and have carried thee farther, than willingly thou wouldst have gone. But pardon me, my Friend. For indeed I have been taken up as it were out of my self for a little while, by the Love of the Supreme Good, and the one only Friend; from and through whom our Friendship is derived down. This was plainly the Occasion of my Excursion; and hereby I was not a little relieved. This Love, I say, this All-powerful Love lifted me up, carrying me as upon his Wings: And, Oh, that for the future this very same Love may more than ever lift me up; and transport thee also in like manner on high! *Let him alone to provide for us the Heavenly Ascension: Let us but keep to the humble Descension.*

Theoph. Agreed.

Philoth. If we *Descend*, then also may we *Ascend*.

Theoph. But if we *Descend not*, then I perceive that *neither* can we *Ascend*.

Philoth. It is very true. I have *Descended*, as thou hast heard: But when I made my Bed, even in Hell, Lo! He was there; and he brought me up, and made me to *Ascend* in the *Flames* of Love.

Theoph.

Theoph. O that I *might* also in like manner! Behold, they that *go down* into the Deep see the Wonders of our Beloved. O the Wonders of his Love, which are past finding out: And of his Mercies, which have no End! O that I *might*——

Philoth. Thou *shalt* also in like manner: Only be thou strong, and of good Heart; and faint not when thou art tried. For who, thinkest thou, shall be Comforted, but they that *Mourn*? Or who shall be filled with Righteousness, and satisfied with Peace, but they that *Hunger and Thirst* thereafter? Or who shall inherit an everlasting Kingdom, but the *Poor in Spirit*? Thus then it becometh to be, that we fail not of obtaining the *Blessing*, even the Promised Inheritance of the Saints. And thus it even was with me.

For when I *mourned* heavily, then comforted he me; and his Banner over me was Love; when I was an *hungred*, then gave he me the Bread of Heaven to eat; and when I was *thirsty*, then gave he me to drink *Wine* mingled with *Milk*: Being a *Stranger*, and a Vagrant, he took me in; and brought me to his Banqueting House: Being *naked*, and ashamed of my own Nakedness, he clothed me with the Robe of his immaculate Righteousness: Being *sick*, and sensible of my desperate Condition, he visited me, and healed all my Diseases; redeeming my Life from Destruction: And lastly, when I was *in Prison*, and as one cast out from the Presence of the Lord, Hell with her Bars seeming to close me about for ever; then, even then, came he unto me; and having broken the Gates of Brass, and cut the Bars of Iron in sunder, brought up my Soul out of Darkness, and the Shadow of Death, that I might bless his Name, and declare what he hath done for me in the Congregation of his Saints. O that my Soul therefore might always praise the Beloved for his Goodness; and for his wonderful Works to me, unworthy one, when I was fast bound in Affliction

ction and Misery; and for all his dear Vouchsafements, and precious Visitations, ever since, to this very Day. And do thou, my Friend, praise Him with me also, and magnifie Him for ever; who hath delivered, and will yet deliver thee to the end, as thy sure Confidence is in Him.

Theoph. The poor shall praise Him; and such as wander now in the Wilderness, in a solitary Way, hungry and thirsty, whose Soul fainteth in them, shall greatly magnifie Him; for he is good, and his Mercy truly endureth forever. He will bring us therefore to a City of safe Habitation, where Praise waiteth for him. What, though I am here a Stranger, Naked also, Sick, and in Prison; thou hast convinced me, O Faithful and Beloved Soul, that I need no more but look unto him, who is always nigh, that he may work out Salvation, when called upon.

And whoso is wise, will ponder and observe those things which thou hast now declared, bringing them forth out of the abundance of thine Heart: That so they may understand the exceeding great Loving Kindness of the LORD our Saviour, who only doth wondrous Works. As for me, I hope not to forget the Lesson thou hast taught me at this time; I mean, not to mind so much the Ascension as the Descension; and to commit my self herein wholly to him, that taketh care for me.

Philoth. This if thou observest, then art thou sure not to be forsaken of him. And if he should seem to leave thee at any time, be satisfied it is but the more strongly to raise thy Desires and Affections, and thereby to attract and knit thee to him faster.

X. *Theoph.* But remembrest thou the Question that was put by me?

Philoth. Thy Inquiry is, whether I be not sometimes left of the Beloved? I Answer, that I am.

Theoph.

Theoph. Pray, what dost thou then?

Philoth. I sustain my self with all the Evenness of Mind that is possible for me:—And so I expect till he come again. In Nature I am burthen'd, but in the Spirit am inwardly upheld; otherwise my Grief would be Inconsolable. Then I constantly consider, that there is no living in Love, without some Pain. In short, I Live by Faith; I Believe the Holy Scriptures, I Assent to the Promises; I commit my self to God's Mercy.

And though it may be bad with me for the present, I distrust not but that It may be soon better; and that God, when it pleases him, can and will send me ease. Neither ought I therefore to distrust him: For true and faithful are the Sayings of the Saints hereupon; and what they have Historically and Experimentally deliver'd, as to this, is most firm, and without all doubt. I consider then that they, in many things, have been exercised, and been proved in like manner with me: That they might be made Perfect, and GOD might be Glorified.

Nature in me is always wishing to be eased; and in somewhat or other seeks still to be comforted. But the Spirit nevertheless is ready to endure all things, whatsoever it shall please GOD that I should suffer. Indevotion and Sluggishness do very greatly indeed sometimes affrighten and dispirit. But should I be cold in my Devotion, and listless to Good Deeds; yet is not my Wound therefore without a Remedy: For
though he slay me, saith the Righteous Man,
Job xiii. yet I will trust in him. What if I love the being exercised in Works of Virtue and Piety? Here is the highest Work, even to deny my Self. Do I seek after the Virtues? Certainly Patience is a great Virtue: Let that therefore now be diligently kept to, and heeded.

For the Difficulty of the Work frequently enhanceth the Brightness for the Virtue. And that Virtue may be tried, and made more Bright and Radiant, it is usual for it to pass through contrary Events. By this means it is the more exalted and purified; and its Lustre in the sight of God, and of his Angels, is far greater.

If therefore any such Probation shall hereafter happen unto thee, my Friend, be not thou diffident, neither be thou cast down; but preserve Patience, and always commend God's Justice.

XI. God is not so Severe, or Unmerciful, that he should suffer thee long to abide Uncomforted. Only take heed; that thou do not immoderately Grieve, neither Murmur against the Just and the Holy One; lest hereby the Evil Spirit take an occasion to send on thee yet sharper Temptations, inciting thee to Despair and Blasphemy: And so thou be hence, through thy own Timorousness and Cowardise, vexed and tormented beyond what is fit.

For this Reason, in the Name of God, bear up thyself a little; and suppress Grief; let never so great Heaviness of Heart, or Body, set upon thee, and assail thy Constancy. Endure firm in the good Resolution, which thou tookest up in the beginning. Let nothing be able to shake thee from it. This is the Critical Point: Now, if ever, will it be mainly helpful to thee; cast all thy Hope upon the Beloved. In this Hour of Probation be sure then to keep upon thy Watch-Tower, and trust him wholly.

Wait with Patience for the Heavenly Consolation; so shalt thou soon find more plentiful Grace, and a more kind Regard from thy God. Lo! thou hast for

this a faithful Witness, saying, *I waited patiently for the LORD, and he inclined unto me.*
Psal. xl.

XII. And that it may not be long before thou obtain this, but it may be almost presently granted thee, be frequent in Prayer and Supplication, and beg also of others to be Prayed for: This done, commit thy self entirely, without any sort of Reserve, to his Will and Ordination; that he may do with thee even whatever shall seem good to him: So he will do for thee better, than thou canst choose for thy self.

And say thou to him with a good Confidence, "*In thy Hands, LORD, are my Seasons.* Let my Time be thine. Thou knowest how it is with me; Thou understandest what it is I suffer: And now, if thou wilt, very soon shall I be comforted. But let that however always be, which seemeth right and good in thine Eyes: And have Mercy upon me, a poor and desolate Beggar, humbly groaning to thee.

Now if after this manner thou shalt persevere in Patience and Long-suffering; and shalt not for the sake of a light Tribulation turn aside from the *Faith*, or from the *Love*, which are *in Christ Jesus*: Verily, verily, the Splendor of his Grace shall be restored to thee again, and more than ever shall it enlighten thee. And the Beloved shall be much dearer to thee as he returneth, than if he had never been at all absent.

For it is not an Unrevokable Sentence: Neither is he so offended, as he cannot be again Reconciled. He will be appeased very soon, and very easily; do thou but do thy Endeavour, and take more heed, and see to perform quickly what thou shalt have engaged to do.

If thou dost acquiesce in these wholesome Admonitions, then shall the Beloved be with thee as before; and in his Presence greatly shalt thou be delighted, and with a merry Heart shalt thou say, "O how plentiful is thy Goodness, how great is thy Sweetness, which thou hast laid up, Lord, for them that fear thee, and hast prepared for them that trust thee!"

"Thou

“ Thou shalt hide them in the Secret of thy Presence
 “ from the Pride of Man; and under the Shadow of
 “ thy Wings shalt thou keep them safely, as in a Pa-
 “ vilion. O how great is thy Goodness!

* O *Sion*, thou shalt be Renewed, and shalt see thy
 Glorious One, who is to Reign in thee. He is the
 King of Virtues, the King of Glory; and he is thy
 Beloved; whose † *Back parts* are covered with the
Paleness of Gold, but whose *Head* is of *Finest Gold*.

And she said to me, These things which are spoken
 for thy Consolation, see thou tell but to very few. But
 as for what remains, and what I have promised to let
 thee know, concerning the apparent Changeableness
 of the Beloved, as how he now manifests himself un-
 der one Appearance, and then strait under another;
 and how he seemeth to run here and there, and so as it
 were to sport himself with thee: At our next meeting,
 if thou be prepared, thou shalt hear and receive from
 his own Mouth.

* O *Sion renovaberis, & videbis inclitum tuum, qui regnaturus est
 in te.*

† *Cujus posteriora in pallore auri, Ps. 67. 13. V. L.*

C H A P. XVIII.

*The Beloved's Answer, giving an Account of his
Withdrawing.*

The Soul and the Beloved here Confer together.

*Marvellous are thy Works, and that my Soul knoweth
right well, Psal. cxxxix.*

Philoth. **W**HY is it, my Beloved, that thou hast done thus? And what is the reason thou leftest me? Answer, I beseech thee. Thou leftest me, and wentest away. But thou art again returned back to me. And in this thing hast thou done well. Hadst thou not come again soon, I should well nigh have fainted.

But thou hast had Mercy upon me, my Secrets not being hid from thee. For I was sorrowful at thy Departure, and now am I comforted afresh by thy Return.

Tell me however something for my Instruction, and let me be taught what Good herein thou didst propose? What advantageth it thee after this manner to run about, and to afflict me? Takest thou a delight to hear, *Abide with us, Lord, for it is towards Evening?* Lovest thou thus to be *constrained*?

Come, and sit thou *in the midst of us*; for, lo! there is I, and a certain other Disciple of thine, who covet much to hear thee: And we beseech thee earnestly, that thou would'st therefore please to teach us.

Speak freely all what thou pleassest: And turn, if thou wilt, thy Discourse to me. None do I more readily hear speak than thee. And if any other speak, for thy sake who speakest in him, his Words

are heard of me : And listning to thee, as speaking through him, his Speech becometh to me both Audible and Grateful.

The Words of thy Lips therefore are sweeter unto me than Honey , and the Honey-Comb ; for they excel all Sweetness of Words, and surpass all that can be imagined. Let now thy Voice sound in my Ears.

II. The Voice of my Beloved thundred and said :

The Beloved. I am He that speaks Righteousness. *Isai. xiv.* Who is like unto me in Counsel, and in Prudence ? Who made the Sea, and the dry Land ? I, the LORD ; forming the Light and creating the Darknes.

Who hath entred into the Abyss, and brought up Waters out of the Deep ? I, the LORD ; searching the Hearts and the Reins.

Who hath known All Things, the First and the Last , and hath beheld whatever was, or is, or is to be ? I, the LORD, who have made all things in Number, and in Weight, and in Measure : I, the Creator of Heaven and Earth ; the Governour of all Ages and Worlds.

I, the Discerner of Secrets, and the Revealer of hidden Misteries, am He. I, even I, containing the Universe, do comprehend all that therein is at once : I both see them all *together*, and I see the Causes of every Particular *individually*. I am GOD, and am not changed ; with whom the Reasons and Proportions of all things Changeable, do Unchangeably subsist.

I am GOD OMNIPOTENT, whose Power is Insuperable.

I am the Most HIGH, whose Height is Inaccessible.

I am GOODNESS, whose Being is Incommunicable.

I am the most Present, and the most Secret.

I am the most Intimate, and the most Remote.

I Bear all things, without any Burthen.

I Rule all things, without any Dissention.

I behold all things at once, both Past and Future, as Present.

I comprehend every Creature, be it Corporeal or Spiritual; being comprehended by none.

I am named after various Manners; yet perfectly Conformable to none.

I suddenly Appear, and then again I as suddenly Disappear, without being perceived.

Verily I am an *Hidden GOD*; and in a thousand Ways do I manifest my self, Sporting and Playing as it were with them that love me, by a continued variety of successive Dispensations.

The Beloved said also what here followeth to the Loving Soul.

III. I said, I will hide my Face from her for a little while; I will leave her for a Moment: That I may see whether she loveth me unfeignedly and purely.

It is a great thing to *Love purely*; because this is to love me not for her own sake; nor for the sake either of Temporal Profit, or Spiritual Comfort; But to love me, and me only, and for my own sake; and finally to love her self for the Love of me merely, and not for any thing she hopeth to obtain from me.

It appertains not indeed to all thus to love me; but it is the Property of a most perfect Soul, and common to none besides is this Prerogative of *pure Love*.

But that Soul, which is yet imperfect, hath need to be frequently proved and excited: That hereby she may come to know both how much she loveth me, and how greatly she despiseth her own self, or whether my Love in her do actually reach to Self-contempt.

For thou hast said in thy Heart, *Indeed I Love*: And this same thing thou art often repeating, *I Love*. But I trust not to Words alone, or to Thoughts alone: For in Truth will I prove thee.

When I am present, and do speak fair to thee ; when I either give Devotion, or encrease it given ; when I put good Motions in the Mind , or raise and exalt them more highly ; when I send nothing but what is Prosperous, or at least for the best part so, and court thee much with pleasant things ; then canst thou with all Devoutness say : *My Beloved, I love Thee.* And well sayest thou so ; for I am exceeding Lovely. And all the things that can be said or thought of me, are Lovely and Sweet, and Praiseworthy to Eternity. I am greatly therefore to be loved of thee always ; and thou art at no time to think or speak otherwise than most Friendly and Honourably of me.

But to love and Praise me, while thou receivest Benefits, what a mighty matter is it ? Do not even the Sinners the same ? They truly often Praise, and give me Thanks , when they receive what they unrighteously covet and long for. But Praise is not comely in the Mouth of a Sinner.

If any one therefore loveth me, for the sake of Benefit, or of Consolation, what doth he more than the Covetous Worldling ? But unto thee I say, exceed thou him : And proceed unto greater Righteousness. Why stayest, why stoppest thou ?

Go on, go on : Press forward to those things that are more perfect. Come up higher : Rest not in any of the lower Degrees.

Be ashamed to be always feeble and soft ; learn to eat *strong Meat*, and do not longer feed on *Childrens Milk*. For why, wilt thou be ever a *Child* ?

Pass thou over into the Number of the mighty Men of *David*, of them that hold both the Spear, and the Sword, and the Shield. Take up the Cross, and follow thou me. Make haste to be numbred among those, who know how to bear for my sake valiantly the many Shocks of the World, and of the Evil One

that

that ruleth therein : Who have learnt joyfully to undergo for me divers Tribulations and Grievances, with fundry kinds of Exile and Death. Thou art too much given unto Ease.

Too much art thou bent to Consolation. Therefore I have a mind to prove thee, and to bend thee to the other side; that so thou may'st experience what thou art able to suffer, lest thou seem to thy self Innocent and Holy.

But I will soon undeceive thee. For this end will I send upon thee Tribulation, and Wrath, and Indignation; together with Evil Angels, that shall not fail to sift thee. Some shall take away from thee such things as are thine; others shall refuse thee such as thou needest. Some shall backbite thee; others shall resist thee to thy Face. Others shall lay upon thee an heavy Yoak; others shall lead thee whither thou wouldest not. Others shall afflict thee outwardly, and others inwardly. Others shall be preferred to Places and Honours; thou left to Contumely and Servile Labour.

In all these, and in greater than these, shalt thou be tried, as it becometh a mighty Champion. I will depart: Yet will I not dismiss thee, before I have examined thee thoroughly, and proved thee on the Test, whether thou wilt *blefs* me to my Face.

And if it shall be made appear, that thou lovest me with all thy Heart; and if thou shalt always, and upon every Occasion, blefs my Name; then it is fit that thou thenceforward be called my *Spouse*, and do obtain a secret Chamber with me.

Nevertheless, if thou art not sufficient as yet to bear my *Rod*, and shalt count hence my Discipline not so very lovely; bemoaning for many Days my Absence; I will send thee my *Staff*, which thou beggest so mightily for, that thou mayest arise: And after that I will come also my self; and thou shalt be restored to my wonted Favour, and shalt be raised up to thy former

Grace again, which shall be unto thee Life from the Dead.

For it is not my Will to have thee altogether faint away; since the Soul that loveth me I also love. And if thou lovest not yet perfectly, or as thou oughtest; yet despise not I thee for being but a little one: But will take care, that thou do grow. For my Care is of thee, that it may be well with thee: I will therefore that thou have no Doubt, or Hesitation concerning me.

V. I know indeed exactly how much thou art able to bear; and hence it is I moderate accordingly my hand: That thou mayest not be tempted above what thou hast Strength to sustain, and so mayest not fall. But if I shall delay to come, what hast thou to do, but wait for me till the Day of Visitation? I will verily come; and satisfy my Promise. In the meanwhile do thou apply thy self to Prayer, and to Reading the Holy Bible; and fail not to hold fast in every thing Patience and long Suffering.

Neither can I be ignorant, that thou during my Absence art in Sadness and Sorrowfulness: But certainly it pleaseth me not, that thou shouldest so suddenly be at this cast down, and fail of all Hope, as as if I were not at all to return again. Child, where is thy Faith?

Great Faith hast thou need of on this account chiefly; because if thou seest me not, yet art thou seen of me: To whom thou oughtest to trust both thy self, and all that thou hast. For notwithstanding that my Judgments may not be understood of thee, yet the Faith that is firm nevertheless saith: *All is Good whatever God disposeth, or worketh.*

Be thou therefore comforted, and of a good Heart; for I say unto thee, this Sickness of thine is not unto Death, but for the Glory of God. Behold I have taken

ken from thee thy Hearts Desire, and I have contrived to try thy Faith and thy Love.

For all these things have I done, that so thou mightest more plainly and clearly know thine Infirmary, and Sickness of Heart: And mightest better understand my Goodness and my saving Health.

Thou knowest not thy self, so well as I know thee. I know thee, and all what is thine, not only from Time, but from Eternity.

Acknowledge therefore what it is, that cometh unto thee from me: See how poor, how very poor thou art in thy own self; how little it is of thy own thou hast to pretend to, if thou art at any time left of me. Thou hast not yet made Proficiency enough in the true Knowledge of thy self. And because it is highly expedient for thee to attain this, my Pleasure is that thou shouldest learn it experimentally.

It is good for thee, that at times thou art afflicted; that thou art desolated, that thou art in Tribulation, that thou art humbled; that so thou may'st make a more manifest Discovery of thy own Infirmary to thy self, and have a strong and evident Sensation of it on thy Mind.

I know this will most conduce to thy Proficiency, and Advantage, every way. And if thereby thou shalt become both more prudent and more careful in every thing by thee undertaken, or designed; tell me what hast thou lost? Thou art commonly too conceited, and ignorant of thy self; thinking thou hast the Good which thou hast not.

VI. Thou art deceived frequently through Self-Love: And while thou considerest not the Giver, thou abusest the Gift. I gave thee plentifully to drink, and thy Heart was glad: But thou forgettest, that the Grape was of my Vine.

Try but thy self, and having made the Experiment own what thou hast: If what thou hast had be of thy

self, then why keptest thou it not? And if thou couldest not keep it, acknowledge thou hast received it from Above.

Give thou therefore the Honour to my Grace; and confess that without me thou canst do nothing. Consider how necessary I am to thee, how sufficient, how abundant and how only powerful to confirm thee in every good thing.

Where wast thou before I called thee, but in the Mire of thy Sins? And where art thou, but where I have brought thee? Nay, when was it ever well with thee without Me?

VII. The Soul answered and said:

Never, sweetest LORD: Thou art my Beloved alone; my One, Onely, and Singular Beloved. In all things faithful art thou: And none is like to Thee.

To whom the Lord again:

If so, whence is it then thou thoughtest so amiss, as to be persuaded to go after other Lovers? What hath displeased thee in me? Hath my Glory, or hath my Beauty?

Philoth. Verily, there is not any like unto THEE in Beauty, or in Glory, in Riches, or in Power: Nor is there such an one in Heaven, or on Earth. For thou, LORD, alone art the *most High* above every Creature. Thine are the Heavens, and thine is the Earth also: Thou hast laid the Foundation of the round World, and all that therein is. What thou hast given to the Creatures is not small. From which thy great Beauty, Wisdom and Goodness do shine forth: But *nothing* is it in Comparison of thy own Blessed and Glorious Presence. I have now learnt by Experience, that it is a bitter thing to me, but to have left thee only for an Hour.

VIII. *The Beloved.* Return therefore unto me, faithful Beloved. It is enough that hitherto thou hast run up and down. Learn to be steadfast and meek, hop-
ping

ping and trusting in me, not only in the *Day* of Visitation, but abundantly in the *Night* of Temptation.

I let thee go, that so being tired thou mightest come back to me again the sooner : And being disappointed in thy outward Solacement mightest at length understand what a Difference there is betwixt the Creature and me ; and of what high Advantage my Love hath been above all other Loves to thee, by which thou hast been so often invited.

Take notice therefore now, that it is not without all Reason, that thou art by me left ; that thou abidest dry, and without Devotion ; that Tediousness and Heaviness seizeth thee ; that thou art wearied out with Temptations ; that thou art afflicted here and there ; that thou findest no Counsel ; neither feelest any Help ; but sufferest on every side Straitness and Poverty. Know that nothing of this cometh to pass, but with good Reason.

I leave thee, to give thee to know how necessary my Presence will be to thee, not only in one Matter. or in some particular Cause of greatest Import ; but indeed in every Action, in every Place and Time, as well early as late, and wheresoever thou shalt be, go or stand. And thus shalt thou be instructed how to walk more carefully with me thy Beloved, and to abstain from Vanities and take heed of Offences.

IX. I leave thee, to give thee to know how much thou lovest me ; that is, that the Measure of thy Love may appear to thee, exactly as it is. Thou didst think thy self both more mighty and blessed, than really thou wast : But it has been most evidently discovered, by the withdrawing but a little of my Succour from thee ; that thou wast both *Poor and Wretched*. How shall thy Love be ever evidenced, unless thou for me patiently bear Grievances and Sufferings.

Sometimes

Sometimes I behold thee lukewarm : And then for the stirring up thy Zeal, and thy Diligence in seeking, I hide my self for an Hour, as the Beloved who *standeth behind the Wall*. I behold, and understand all things : But Exercise is profitable for many things ; and it giveth often a greater Insight and more thorough Knowledge. Since if thou lovest me, thou wilt not certainly delay to seek for me. If I please thee, thou wilt take care to make a Search to purpose.

Knowest thou not that Riches gotten with Labour are held fast with more earnestness ? To whom is Rest so desirable as to the wearied Traveller ? To whom is Love so pleasant as to the Lover enduring the Sorrow of Restraint ? And a Treasure that is found again, after being lost, is it not twice dearer than before ? Thus by the Intermission of the Beloved's Presence Joy returns double to what it was at first ; and the satisfaction in recovering the same is much more heightened than otherwise it could possibly have been.

For thy Profit therefore I withdraw my self forasmuch as I do not this out of any Displeasure, but by a certain Gracious and Loving Dispensation do play with the Lovers. Let this suffice for the present.

But I give thee leave of returning to me, as often as thou shalt feel there is need. I have never shut up my Bowels against the humble and serious Suppliant.

C H A P. XIX.

Of Confidence in the Divine Mercy.

A Dialogue betwixt *Theophilus* and the *Beloved*: Or,
the *Servant* and the *Lord*.

* *My God, my Mercy!* [the God unto me of all Mercy] *will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded,* Psal. lix. 17. and Isa. l. 7, 9.

THIS Servant of the Lord, by this time, now was fully satisfied: And being not a little encouraged by such a free manner of Conversation betwixt him and that devout Soul, received Boldness hereby also of Access to him immediately; not despairing in the least of an Answer from his Majesty. But first he argued thus with some, that would fain have dissuaded him against it.

Let it not seem strange or absurd to any one, if I long frequently to converse with the Lord my God; Whose Benignity often attracts me, and even fires me both for Prayer and Meditation, though in my self otherwise most dull and lazy, cold and torpid; so as not to answer therefore to the Calls of his sweet Voice, soundeth to me most harsh and ungrateful. I say, let it grieve or trouble no body, tho' I love much to be speaking with my Lord, whose Goodness hath so allured, and whose Charity hath so enflamed me to draw nigh, and to meditate and commune with him in such sort; as methinks I should be not only too hard and unkind, were he no more than a common

* *Deus meus, Misericordia mea,*

Friend

Friend, but even utterly inexcusable, if I made no return to his gracious Words.

But perhaps some body may object against me:
 “ Therefore fearest not thou God, since thou art
 “ truly an unclean Sinner, and unworthy even of
 “ Life it self. Whence arises in thee such a Presum-
 “ ption of Heart? And seeing thou art the least of
 “ all, and no more to be despised than any, what hast
 “ thou to do to thrust thy self thus into such holy
 “ Colloquies, and divine Conversations? With what
 “ Face canst thou put forth thy self, so to talk with
 “ God? Whom, pray, makest thou thy self to be?

Then cried I unto the LORD from the Deep of my Soul: And my Voice enter’d his Ear.

II. *Theoph.* O LORD, my Beloved, answer thou for me; because the Mouth of the wicked is opened against me. If I would justifie my self, my own Mouth shall condemn me. And though I were Righteous, yet would I not answer; but would make Supplication to thee my Judge and my Advocate. As for any thing that is good in me, my Soul is ignorant of it. Thou knowest my Foolishness, and my Confusion. Speak thou: And I will gladly hold my Peace.

And the Voice of my Beloved came to me, saying,

The Beloved. Son, heed not the Words of them that upbraid thee; but listen rather to what I have said,

Mark ii. *I come not to call the Righteous, but Sinners.* Is it not lawful for me to do as I will? Who shall resist my Will? If I have a mind to do good unto thee, though even the least and last of all, who is it that shall reprove me for having done Amis?

Whosoever is without Sin, let him cast at thee the first Stone. And if they also are Sinners, why detract they then from Grace? Thou hast not chosen me; but my Mercy hath prevented thee.

Doth

Doth any one yet murmur against thee, because thou hast approached me? Surely the Murmuring of such an one is not against thee, but it is openly against me; because that I entertain Sinners, and do eat with them. And why shouldest thou not vindicate to thy self my Familiarity, which I rejoyce more to express than to withhold.

III. *To whom I:* My Beloved Lord, let not this I pray thee be imputed unto them; but unto me, and unto my Sins. I do not deny ought for which they have an ill Opinion of me; but readily I acknowledge the same, and that it is even much worse than what is known.

He answered again: Well is it for thee, that thou hast humbled thy self; for so art thou sure always to gain the more. Yea, well is it for thee, that thou hast thus abhorred thy self, and that thy very Heart trembled for its Transgressions, and was moved out of its place: For hereby shalt thou the more easily obtain my Favour, and shalt be enriched with my Grace, above others of thy Companions. Be thou of good Cheer, my Son, for thy Sins are forgiven thee. Thou shalt not be cast away, or slighted, because thou hast been a Sinner, and art subject to great and many Defects. Behold, Salvation cometh to thy House, O thou that sittest in the Dust, and knowest thy self to be a Worm. Look up, and behold it coming to thee. Hast thou sinned? Thou hast also acknowledged thy Sin: Therefore I will, be thou free. Wherefore let others take heed how they despise thee: Yet art not thou at all hereby exempt from despising thy self. For the Sense of thine own Unworthiness ought so deeply still to be engraved in thy Heart, as to make thee continually more and more slight and contemn thine own self, and never to forget in how great things thou hast offended.

But if at anytime too great Anxiety, and an uneasy Solicitude, should seize upon thee; then consider thou, how often of Sinners, I make Saints; and of Enemies, Friends: Setting aside for my self the Lowly in Mind, but leaving those that presume on their own selves. I have no need that thou should'st give me any thing of what is thine, only this I require at thy hands, namely, That thou love me with a pure Heart, and it sufficeth.

At which, being touched to the Quick, I could not forbear bursting out in this manner: Ah, shame upon me, that there is nothing, yea nothing, in me, that could be an Incitement of thy Love toward me!

Then comforted he me again, speaking after this sort to my Heart.

I attend to nothing of all those things, which the World brings to please with: I require none of them. Love of it self is sufficient. Keep this but hot, and let it persevere with me. Let all the rest go. This is enough. But suppose thou hadst them all: What then? Hadst thou also all the Embelishments, Beauties, Graces and Excellencies, which thou canst fancy to thy self? Thinkest thou with these to charm my Love to thee, poor Creature? Whose are they all, even all that either Adorn or Enrich the Man? Are they not all Mine, whiether they appertain to the Body, or to the Soul; whether they Beautifie the one, Illustrate the other, or Honour both? And as for those which are properly of the World, and do more peculiarly respect the Bodily Part, they sure deserve very little thy Concern. But those which relate to the Beauty of Holiness, and of Virtue, and to the Ornament of a good Conversation, ought to claim the utmost of thy Care: And thy undoubted Interest it is to Watch hereunto, that so thou may'st Walk in all Well-pleasing before me in the Light of the Living.

Howbeit thou hast justly humbled and accused thy self before the Face of my Majesty, truly confessing thy Infirmities, and thy shameful Transgressions, and most deeply lamenting the same; and Groaning in Spirit, because thou art no wise worthy of my Familiarity, or to claim my Peace, though but for a Moment: Since I am a Mirror, without Spot; and thou a Sinner, spotted and unclean from the very Womb.

Be thou mindful therefore of thy own frail Condition, and of my Sovereign Glory; of thy low Estate, and of my exceeding Highness: And so with humble Reverence do thou approach confidently to me. I am the Lord, thy Holy One: I, even I am He, that blot-teth out thy Transgressions for mine own sake; and will not remember thy Sins, because of my Name which I have called upon thee.

IV. Neither do I only confer these Benefits, which thou seest and feelest; but have I yet far greater Gifts than any of these, and more triumphing Mercies than what thou hast hitherto perceived; which I am ready to bestow upon thee. For I always choose rather to shew Mercy than Wrath; and to Spare rather than to Punish. Nay as if this were all but a little matter, I still go on: Nor am I content, unless after the *first* Grace, I add also a *second*, and even a *third*. Yea, there is no End which I put to my Mercies; nor is the Number of my Graces and Benefits utterable.

In the last place after Pardon of Sins, after full and unfeigned Repentance, after all due Satisfaction given to thy Power, and after a continued Course for some time a true Virtue and Holiness; I generally Restore the Joy of my saving Countenance, by infusing a more abundant Grace of the Holy Ghost.

And though even the Sinner should not be perfectly converted from the Flesh to me, yet receive I him sometimes to a nearer Familiarity with me, disdaining
not

not his Addressees : Even while he sticks in the Mire, my Mercy lays hold on him ; and he sees himself receiv'd into my Friendship. So that for the Evils by him committed, there remains no longer any Confusion of Face : But rather giving of Thanks, and the Voice of Praise ; for that the Old Things are past away, and all things are made New.

So Compassionate and Merciful am I, as to be always more ready to Forgive, than thou to repent ; and more swift to Grant, than thou to Ask. What art thou then afraid of ? Why tremblest thou to approach the Bosom of so infinite Goodness, and unparallel'd Mercy ? And why should'st thou estrange thy self from my Grace, which is so freely offer'd ?

Nay didst thou even know, that I had purposed to deny thee ; yet nevertheless oughtest thou not for this to desist from Praying, nor to let go the Confidence of thy being Heard : But with so much the greater Vehemence to press on, and be instant till at last thou hast thy Petition answered. For boundless are my Compassions : And that which at one time is denied, at another may be graciously granted. Therefore I say unto thee faint not.

V. For how knowest thou, but that I may some time or other turn to thee my Face, and give thee the Desire of thy Heart ? And what sayeth the

Pf. xxxiv. 5.
Sec. lxx. &
v. L.

Prophet concerning me, *Draw ye near unto him, and ye shall be enlightned ; and your Faces shall not be ashamed.* Seek but me

therefore, and I will hear thee : Yea, I will deliver thee out of all thy Fear ; that so thy Soul may make her boast in me, and my Praise henceforth may be ever in thy Mouth. Draw near, I say, to me ; so shalt thou, in my Light, be enlightned : Draw near to me, thy Salvation ; so shalt thou never be confounded ; for mine Eyes are still over thee, and mine Ears open to thy devout Addressees. I rather accuse the Rare-
ness,

ness, than the Frequency of thy Approaches; and more blame a cowardly Bashfulness in thee, than an over-forward Confidence of Pardon.

To be confident concerning my Goodness, is a Token of the right Humility; and of great Faith. These things I say unto thee, that thou sin not; and if thou sin, that thou despair not; but suddenly rise again. For thou hast yet Hope, and an Advocate with the Father. Wilt thou wait till thou be made Worthy; before thou draw near? And of thy self, when shall this be? O when shalt thou be able to approach; if thou stay till then? If none but the Righteous and the Worthy, but the Great and the Perfect Men; ought to come near to me; unto whom then shall the Sinners and the Publicans go? What therefore says my Gospel? Remembrest thou?

Theoph. I remember it saith, *Then drew near unto him all the Publicans and Sinners, for to hear him.* Luk. xv. 1.

The Beloved. Let therefore the Unworthy draw near, that they may be made Worthy. Let the Wicked draw near, so shall they be made Righteous. Let the Little Ones draw near, that they may be made Great; And the Imperfect, that they may become Perfect. Let all and every one draw near, let all approach severally and together, that they may receive of the Fulness of the Living Fountain. I, even I, am the Fountain of Life, which can never be drawn dry. Ho! every one that is a-thirst, let him come to me and drink. And he that hath nothing, let him come and buy *without Money, and without Price*. He that is Sick, let him come, that he may be healed. He that is Lukewarm, let him come, that he may be inflamed. Is any one sorrowful? Let him come, that he may be comforted. Is any one heavy Laden? Let him come; that he may be eased of his Burden. Is any one Fearful? Let him come that all Fear may be done away.

Is there any one that Halteth? Let him come, that his Feet may be made as Hinds Feet. Let him that is Blind come, that he may be made to See, and to rejoice in the Light. Let him that is Dumb come, that his Tongue may be unloosed, and a Song of Thanksgiving put into his Mouth. Let him that is Dry and Wasted away come, that he may be filled as with the Marrow and Fatness of the Spirit. Let him that is dulled with Weariness come, that he may be refreshed with Joy.

Behold, my Delights are to be with the Children of Men. Whoever coveteth after Wisdom, let him come and hearken to my Instruction. Whoever searcheth after Riches, let him come, that he may receive such as are Inalienable and Incorruptible. Whoever hunteth after Honours, let him come, that he may be clothed with Honour as with a Garment, and may receive a Diadem of unfading Glory. Whoever is Ambitious of a Name, let him come that he may inherit an Everlasting Name in Heaven. Whoever desireth Felicity, let him come that without fear and peril he may possess all that his Heart can wish. Whoever, lastly, longeth for the abundance of all Good and Desirable Things, let him come to me, that he may receive, yea, thoroughly receive, the Supreme, Eternal, and Infinite GOOD.

I am He, that bestow all *Temporal* Good Things: And besides and above these, do I give also the *Eternal*. Nor will I be wanting to my Promise, when the Observance of my Commandments shall by any be filled up. And he shall be *gloriously* Crowned in Heaven, who shall have *lawfully* Fought in the World. Remember my Words.

C H A P. XX.

The Desire of Divine Fruition.

Let the Meditation of my Heart be always in thy sight;
Psal. xix. 14.

A M E D I T A T I O N.

I. **T**O a Faithful Soul; what can be more Sweet, more Pleasant, or more Comfortable, than to Meditate upon her Beloved, the Divine Bridegroom: That so she may make him at least Present to her; by devout Remembrance and Reflexion; whom she is not yet able to behold with an open Eye, or in that clear and beatific Vision which the Blessed above enjoy. Let her therefore in the mean while contemplate him darkly, at least through a Glass, whom she cannot see Face to Face. And if for the dazzling Brightness of his Glory, she be not able to subsist even in this Contemplation of Him; however obscure and weak; let her then search him out diligently through the sacred Scriptures, and look for him under those Mystic Veils and Figures; whereby for wise ends, he has been pleased to cloud his Majesty, according to that Proportion we were best able to bear. Let her behold him as in a Mirror; whose direct Vision is infinitely too strong for her to bear: Let her view him in the humble Rags of *her Humanity*, if she be struck Blind by the refulgent Lustre of *his Deity*, even when but Reflected: And should she be no wise sufficient to behold him; either one way or the other, or to take any right view of him; though never so imperfect; let her not give over to seek for him, till, by Reading and Meditating on the Holy Records, she shall have

found him whom she loveth ; and till he shall have anointed her Spiritual and most Inward Eye, that she may see him standing behind her Wall, even the Flesh, which is the Wall of Partition, and looking *through the Lattices* upon her. O that the Study of Seeking the Lord's Face might never cool ; but that it might, day by day, grow more and more fervent ! Now in the Soul that loveth GOD, there is an uncessant Heat, and unsatisfiable Fervour, fully to enjoy the Vision of Him : Because the Vision of GOD is the highest Beatitude, and most perfect and consummate Felicity. She panteth therefore after this Beatitude ; she breatheth after it only ; she longeth and sigheth for it ; with her whole Heart she is bent to obtain it, cost what it will ; all her Desire, all her Longing, all her Appetite is this : That so her whole Appetite, by a Conjunction with its proper End, may be fully satiated and quieted ; which it can never be with ought here below, let the Appearances thereof be never so Promising and Magnificent : Since by frequent Experience she hath learn'd, that the farther she wanders from Heavenly Blessedness, or goes out from the Presence of the Beloved ; so much the more is she Restless and Unhappy : For as much as she finds nothing in the Creatures, that is of any Stability or Duration, or that is capable any wise of allaying her Passion, or filling that Amorous Desire with which she burneth.

II. Let her therefore Return unto him, by whom she was made ; and seek for Blessedness from him, to whom she oweth her Original. For verily, he who created the Soul, is he who satisfieth her Desire with good things, in those that love him, and seek him. For he hath implanted such an Affection in her, as this One being but removed, there is no Good that can content her, or Joy that she can safely hold. Tarry not therefore here my Soul ; for as much as this is not the Place of thy Rest : But go thou on still forward

ward and upward; Mount, Ascend, Fly to Him, who made thee. For even now, at this very instant, lo! he is sending Messengers, and inviting thee to come up to him. As many holy Desires as he inspires into thee, and as many Breathings after eternal Beatitudes he quickens thee with: So many Messengers, so many Embassadors sends he after thee. Whom having entertained as thou oughtest, they will not fail to accompany thee on in thy Journey: And therefore so soon as ever thou hast received them, prepare thy self to *walk*, without any Demur to the Matter, or Hesitation in thy Mind. Thou *walkest*, if thou desirest to see him; if thou strivest to please him; if thou divorcest thy self from all inferior Loves; and if, having renounced the World and all that is in it, thou actest in all things merely for his Sake, and from his Motion; and so, through the Love of Him working in thee, dost whatever is to be done, or omittest whatever is to be left undone. For then thou entertainest his Messengers, and then goest thou on with them, when after this manner thou seekest him: And when abdicating this World, and thy own Self too, thou dost whatever thou dost even of pure Love towards him; resolving to follow him, without any Reserve, whithersoever his Majesty goeth, or inviteth thee to go, let it be never so contrary to thine own Will, or Inclination of Nature. Lo! he himself goeth before thee, who, when thou wast lost, sought thee out, and sent these his Harbingers before his Face, that thou mightest be confirmed in his Grace, and instructed to tread continually in his holy Footsteps. For thou could'st not have ever sought him, unless that he had first sought thee, and raised up in thee Godly Desires, and Devout Aspirations. Since the Soul that is not visited with the Rays of the Everlasting Sun, doth truly sit in Obscurity, and in the Shadow of Death; not

in the least able to see how to help her self, or even to discern any thing aright as it is; and consequently much less to set about it. Such a Soul as this must needs be in a very languishing Condition: But she languisheth not for Love, but for pernicious Irksomeness. Till she be then enlightned, how great is her Darkness? And till she be inflamed, how great is her Deadness? Alas! she languisheth not through the Heat of Divine Charity, but the Chilness and Numness which bind her in the Absence thereof. But no sooner is she thawed out of her chill and frozen State, by the South-Wind gently blowing upon her, and sweetly fanning the warm Beams of the Sun of Righteousness; but presently she begins to wax hot, and to boil up (and even over) with the Desire of the Inspired Light and Grace: In order to obtain the Glorious Object of her Love, and to comprehend, after a manner, somewhat of the Incomprehensible Majesty of the Divine Being.

III. O thou Sun of Glory, Immense Fountain of all Glories, and blessed Lights, the Root and Center of Immortality; who art the only Living Light, or Light of Life, whereby all Intelligent and Rational Spirits have their Subsistence; how dost thou recreate and vivify the fainting Soul, and exhilarate the clouded Mind! How goodly is thy Tabernacle! How fair the first Bridal Chamber of Nature, and the Place of thy Eternal Coming forth! And how rejoicest thou as a Giant to run thy Course through the whole System of the Intellectual World! O the Charms of thy All-ravishing Beams! O the irresistible Fire of thy Love, and the unquenchable Flames thereof, which thou enkindlest in humble and dedicated Hearts! What holy Ardours, what rapturous fiery Flights, what Spring-tides of Love and Joy, are hence produced in the Soul! To the *Light* thereof are all things naked, both in Heaven
and

and Earth, and under the Earth: And nothing is hid from the *Heat* thereof. It dissolveth the fierce Bonds of the North, and breaketh in sunder the Chains of Darknes, and of Death. O that thou my Soul wert fet on fire hereby, and that thou could'st but live and bask thy self in those burning Streams of everlasting Charity, which continually issue forth from the immense Ocean of the Deity, the infinite Abyss of Light and Life. Ah! why defers the Beloved of my Soul so long his coming? Is he afraid, lest perhaps she melt as Wax before the Fire at his Presence! and that my Heart, musing within me, be turned even to Ashes, by the Breath of his Mouth? Well, let it be even so. For I am indeed longing to be after this manner dissolved, that so I may be with my Lord. Since this would be to me not Loss, but *Gain*; yea, abundant and over-flowing Gain. O happy Dissolution in these Divine and most sweet Flames! O the transforming Power thereof! How wonderfully do they draw! How do all the Thoughts of my Heart vanish of a sudden, as Smoke before them! How do all the old things pass away, and how are the old Heavens themselves rolled up by them as a Scroll, and made to disappear! Blessed, eternally blessed, be thou, O Sun of Truth, who for this very end comest forth as a Bridegroom out of thy Chamber: Who makest the dead earth to blossom and spring; and turnest the Dust thereof into Sparks of Fire, that they may run to and fro fulfilling thy Will. If thou slayest, thou also makest alive: And the Face of all things thou renewest, O my Life, and my Resurrection.

IV. Thou art the Resurrection; of a Truth, thou art the Life Eternal; thou art my Strength and my Redeemer, the Light and the Joy of my Heart, for ever and ever. Thou moldest the Soul as Wax in thy Hands: And out of the Ashes, even the Ashes burnt

on thy most Sacred Altar of Love, a Bird of Paradise is seen to arise, and to mount up as an Eagle to thee. If my Soul melt not at thy dear Presence, O GOD, my Saviour, how shall it receive the Impression of thy Seal? And unless I am first made a Sacrifice on this thy Altar, how can I expect thee to be made to me the Power of an endless Resurrection? O how dost thou fire Souls! And if thou firest them, shall they not ascend to thee in Flames; Yea, verily: What shall be able to hinder? Wherefore my Soul burns with the earnest Desire of possessing thee, and cannot rest. There is no rest for her, till she be fast lodged in thy Bosom. How many scorching Heats dost thou cause in the Lover, that was once altogether stiff and frozen, before this be effected! O make not any longer tarrying, but perfect thy Work in me speedily. Why sufferest thou me to go so heavily? O send out thy Light and thy Truth, that they may lead me: And give me Wings, the Wings of thy Spirit, that I may fly away to the Sanctuary of thee, my God; and have my Dwelling in the Place of thy Rest, O God of my Joy and my Gladness. The long Days, and Years of Poverty, thou abundantly makest up for: All the Evil that is past, all the Labours underwent, all the Pains suffered, are nothing, when I consider the reviving Light of thy Countenance: The least Visit, and Smile, whereof I prefer before numberless Worlds.

V. O JESU, the Medicine of the sorrowful, the bright Lamp of such as here do stray, and seek! Do thou continually shine upon me; do thou prepare thee a Mansion in me; do thou establish me with thy Grace, and enlighten me with thy Wisdom, that my Feet may not err; stay thou with me, as a Lamp *in a dark Place*, till the everlasting Day do break forth upon me. O how sweet and pleasant will thy Presence be, when these Shadows shall be made to pass away!

away! How will the Soul then rejoice under the Wings of thy Salvation, when all her Darkneſs ſhall be diſſipated at once by the Brightneſs of thy Appearance! For if but the Memory of thee alone be ſo delectable, and if ſuch Comforts flow but from bare Reflexion only; how great, how ſweet, muſt that Delectation be, and how ſurpaſſingly large thoſe Comforts, when thou ſhalt actually give thy ſelf to the Soul, to be enjoyed and poſſeſſed of her! In the mean while, how glad would I be to be rid of all things, that this World can tempt me with; that ſo, being wholly turned to thee, I may be comforted and ſtrengthen'd with thy Grace, in this my Pilgrimage! For it will be no ſuch hard Matter for a Soul that longs to behold thy Face, to ſtrip and divest herſelf of all that is Temporal and Transitory: And under the Power of thy Drawings to diſdain that Delight, as too ignoble for her, which ſprings from no higher a Source than Earth. And ſince ſhe already feels within a nobler and greater, as well as more durable Foundation of Joy, no Wonder is it that ſhe can ſo eaſily deſpiſe and ſpurn at all that paſſes under that Name and Figure here. O Bleſſed Soul, whom nothing of this World can longer charm, as having him that is greater than the whole World! O Bleſſed Soul, that haſt him, when thou ſeeſt him not, and think'ſt him at the wideſt diſtance from thee! He is with thee, and will be with thee to the end: Who will not fail to answer thy Faith, which is in Love, and to crown thee in the end with the Fulneſs of his Joy.

VI. Beſides, let none when tempted, fooliſhly imagine, that thou, Lord, wilt ever leave the Soul that is devoted to thee, any conſiderable time without Conſolation; or that ſhe ſhall receive, even in this World, but little Gifts or Tokens, of thy more ſpecial Grace and Favour, for all her Victories over Nature, under thy Banner: Since there is no Earthly Delight whatever,

ever, no, not any that can be so much as conceiv'd, which either for Quality or Quantity can be in the least compared with thy Heavenly Comfort, wherewith thou sometimes in this Life fillest the Soul that is empty. Study therefore, O faithful Soul, so to present thy self to Christ the Heavenly Bridegroom, as thou may'st be found always fit to receive of his Grace and Consolation: For through him, and in him, shalt thou most plentifully find That, which shall be able to comfort thee in every Anxiety, and to raise thee up under every Deadness. The more frequently thou shalt draw near to him, and the more closely thou shalt cleave to his side, so much the sweeter and the pleasanter will he appear to thee. But if thou shalt at any time withdraw thy self, thou alone shalt suffer the Loss: For he, abiding in his own Loveliness still the same, will lose nothing by it. Thou hast need of his Goodness, not he of thine, or of any Man's. And thou art capable hence of being made happier by him, not he by thy Improvement. He is alone; and needeth no other: The only Self-sufficient Being is he; to whom nothing can be added, and from whom nothing can be taken. By his Grace are all things that are, that live, that are endow'd with Sense, that are ennobled with Reason, or that are illustrated with pure Understanding. All subsist, and live, and move in him, and through him: And if he withdraw in his Breath but ne'er so little, they all perish, as if they had never been. It is therefore meet and right, that all the things that are created, do evermore laud and magnifie his glorious Name, praising him according to his excellent Greatness; *of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things.* To whom accordingly be Glory, and Honour, and Blessing, and Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

This being ended, the Devout Soul thus addressed herself, and said to me:

VII. O that I could but sufficiently declare him unto thee! How fain would I do it, if it were possible! O that I could but more open and unfold to thee that Beauty, that Loveliness, that Majesty, which I behold in him; and which have drawn me so after him: That they may draw thee also, in like manner, to the fulfilling of thy Joy. How glad would I be, O my Friend, could I but at all prove serviceable in this! But what is in it self unutterable, can never for certain be uttered: And of what is unconceivable there can no Conception be formed. But since it is so, I advise thee however, in the mean time, to think and meditate after the manner of a *Man*, that is, according to the present Capacity of thy Faculties, upon thy Creator. Who, according as thou shalt use them, will *enlarge* them; and *fill* them being enlarged: whereby thou may'st still more and more comprehend of his incomprehensible Sweetness; till from the Reflexion upon it Here, thou at length arrive to the full Possession of it in his Everlasting Kingdom Above. *At which my Heart being much smitten, said, Amen!*

C H A P. XXI.

The Sighing of the Soul by reason of Glory defer'd:

Philothea and Theophilus.

† *Philothea. When I made hast [or, when I was beside my self, V. L.] I said I am cast out of the Sight of thine Eyes, Psal. xxxi. 24.*

MY Heart is smitten within me, because of the Delay of thy Glory. I will speak, and I will commune with my Lord *in the Bitterness* of my Soul. The Force of thy Love constrains me to speak; and will not let me hide any thing from thee. But what now shall I utter, or what shall I tell thee? Behold, my God, * *in Peace my Bitterness is exceeding bitter.* He that is void of Understanding, can never know what these Words mean. But it is not so, Lord, with me at this time, for I both know and feel what it is; and therefore am not ashamed to take up here the Words of the Prophet. I speak to thee the Lord my God, to whom all things are known, and who hath given me both to know and to feel the same, according to thy good Pleasure: Lest perhaps I should boast of my self, or that I should be accounted of as something by the Unwise. That therefore which I have received from thee, I declare to thee. And yet what need is there that I should tell it thee? since thou knowest all things; and expectest not any Aid or Comfort from them? For what Aid, what Comfort, what Consolation, can thence accrue to thee, who possessest the

† *Ego dixi in excessu mentis meae.*

* *In Pace amaritudo mea amarissima.*

infinite Fulness thereof in thy self: And who art both the only true Help of the Helpless, and Consolation of the Desolate. So that indeed it may be altogether profitable for me, who do yet stand in need of being eased and comforted with Words, that I should quicken my Affection up toward thee with good and gracious Discourses: And cause thereby some Refreshment to my forlorn and desolate Soul. This therefore I will do. And because I cannot see thee present, I will lament thee absent: Inasmuch as even this is a Mark and Indication of Love, and is no small Pleasure oftentimes to the Lover. Now then the Sense of this Versicle begins to appear; because concerning the Loving Soul, nothing can be more properly written than this, when it is duly Considered. For so much the more ardently as she Loves, so much the more vehemently Longs she after those things that are Eternal; and so much the more truly, and efficaciously, feels she the Power of these few Words to live in her. They are not cold and lifeless ones to any, but to such as are void of Love. The loving and flaming Soul understands them: And as often as her Heart grows hot within her, so often is she struck with an holy Compunction, springing from the Love of the Everlasting Peace. She therefore speaketh under the Influence of it, unto thee the Lord her God; not unto Men, to whom she desires to be unknown. But if at any time she happens to speak to Men, that which they hear is but somewhat still without: On the other side, whatever she speaketh to thee, she speaketh from within. What she thus speaketh is not to the outward Ear, but to the inward Life: not to the Sense, but to the very Soul. And rather by the mute Language of Love, than by the tinckling Eloquence of the Theatre; that is, rather by *Loving,

* *Amando magis quam sonando.*

than by Sounding it forth; and by sighing of the Heart, than by any formal or exprefs Words. *Behold, saith the Soul, in Peace my Bitterness is exceeding bitter.*

As if she would confess thus, and say: “ Since I
 “ have been restored, Lord, by thy gracious Vouch-
 “ safement to Peace of Mind, the deceitful State of
 “ the World grows more burthensome and grievous
 “ to me: For I behold in this Peace, at what di-
 “ stance I stand from the Supream Peace. And in-
 “ deed so long as I was possessed by Earthly Desires,
 “ and tossed about with various Passions, I was migh-
 “ tily hindered from my interiour Operations, and
 “ all what more nearly belong’d to me from within,
 “ and by consequent from the Contemplation of Ce-
 “ lestial Objects, after which I ought to have sigh’d
 “ and groan’d; but was not any wise capable of this,
 “ for that, through Carelessness; I had even lost the
 “ Sense of internal Compunction, . But now the Tu-
 “ mults of my vain Thoughts being stilled; I take
 “ up my rest a little in Peace of Mind; and while I
 “ sit in quiet and undisturbed, I am drawn with the
 “ whole desire of my Heart to those things that are
 “ *Above*; and do consequently much more lament;
 “ because the Fruition of the Celestials is yet kept
 “ from me; than I did at first when I was crossed on-
 “ ly with the Terrestrials. The evil things that I
 “ met with in the World did not comparably afflict;
 “ as the long deferring of the good things of God do
 “ at this present. Ah! what is the Loss of this whole
 “ Earth, with all that therein is, had I been even
 “ absolute Master and Proprietor of it all, in Com-
 “ parison of the Absence of my Beloved? O my
 “ Beloved! Why thus hidest thou thy self from me?
 “ What meaneth this Delay, after that I am so drawn
 “ unto thee from the Ground of the Heart? O De-
 “ lay, to me most burthensome, and most afflictive!

“ Lo;

“ Lo, my God, in Peace is my most bitter Bitterness.

II. It is therefore *Bitterness* to my Soul even to converse in this Word, and to lie under the Load and Burthen of Sin. But this becomes to me yet far more *exceeding bitter*, yea it is a *most bitter Bitterness*, when having to my very utmost recollected and reunited my Affections, so as I come to enjoy a good degree of Tranquillity and Peace of Heart, and am stirred up thence with all my Might and Strength, to run into the Embraces of the Eternal Peace; yet I cannot attain it by reason of the Bonds of Mortality, which chain and fetter me down so miserably. And therefore am I constrained to cry unto thee, O Lord, with heavy Groaning; and needs must I say, O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this vile Body of Death? Since I feel no Burthen heavier, than to continue long a Sojourner and Stranger from thee in this Worldly Principle: Because that being sick of Love, I require no other Consolation but thee; and labouring in Love, there is no other Rest or Refreshment for me, but thou alone. For I have learnt by most evident and certain Experience, that my Soul can never be satiated with the good things of this Life, nor can ever attain to true Blessedness, but as being joined to thee she shall be enfeoffed in the Heavenly Mansion. For though she may exceedingly love, flame, and contemplate while she is in the Body; yet her Affection can never be satisfied, while the Body is not put off; such is her Unfatiableness. The Acquirement of the Chief Good, and the Light of thy Countenance, is the Consummation of what she proposes to her self.

III. O King of Heaven, King of Glory, King of Love, Glorious above all in Majesty and Power, Amiable above all in Beauty and Sweetness! O my Beloved, who art most Fair, yea altogether Lovely,
and

and the only Desirable: When wilt thou fill me with Joy, even with thy Presence? When wilt thou satisfy all my Desire from an ever-flowing Spring? My Soul hath been much a-thirst after thee, and not obtaining thee is in sundry manners mightily afflicted. As long as I live on the Earth, and do not yet behold thee, every thing that I look upon is to me matter of Sorrow. My Heart waxeth within me so very hot, as that I do not only once, but often and vehemently cry out, even as in a Transport: *When shall I come, and appear before the Presence of God?* The Love still grows and increases, and the Desire is daily more and more fir'd: So that I cease not from weeping either by Day or by Night, while I am thinking Day after Day, *Where is my God?* For to the Lover it is sweet to weep for thee, so long as she cannot have what she desires. However, it is her bounden Duty to wait, and to want. The Loving Soul is by these Weepings fed, and satisfied more than if she had all that the Earth can give; than if she had all the Worldly Objects to feed and delight her Senses with. For did she love them, she certainly would not weep for thee.

IV. *Theoph.* O how blessed and how pleasant to thee, O Choice one of the Beloved, is the pouring out of such Tears as these! Since they are the very Destroyers of Secular Joys and Temporal Pleasures; the Promoters of Celestial Consolations, and the devout Purchasers of Eternal Bliss; wherein all Tears shall be wiped away, and there shall be no more Sorrow or Crying. Wherefore this over-flowing of holy Tears, as I perceive, is only to be found in some specially Devoted and Amorous Souls. There is quite another Ground of Tears in them who in the World labour under Necessity and Misery: This Man for instance, because he is sickly; that, because he is oppressed; and another, because he is some way or other injured; takes

takes on, and bitterly laments. And another perhaps will sometimes even weep because his Will is crossed. All this is not right. It is thou only, O Devout Soul, who sheddest the Tears of Divine Love. But as for Temporal Losses, and Transitory Causes, thou submittest thy self to the true Judgment of God, and givest Thanks.

Let not then he that is Indevout, seeing thee weep, censure thee for Foolishness or for Impatience: For such Tears as these do not sadden, but refresh; do not afflict, but relieve; do not blot, but cleanse; do not hurt the Eyes, but purifie the Heart. Let others think of thee even as they please, for my part, I cannot think otherwise than well: For I also wish that I could but drink of a Flood of Tears, like thine: For certainly to sow in these will make my best Harvest.

V. *Philoth.* If thou wishest to mourn with me, fear not but thou shalt be comforted. O that thy Soul were as my Soul, then would'st thou never be ignorant what it is I feel. I know in whom I have believed, and I am certain: Because it is easier to deny Heaven and Earth to be, than to doubt whether God is. Yea, I know him verily to be the Good of my Soul: And that it is not possible for me ever to be happy without the perfect Contemplation of Him.

The Contemplation of whom being not yet so conferr'd upon me; as I long for, nor so durably confirm'd, hence I go mourning, because I am deprived of so great Felicity; because I am involved in the Darkness of this Life; because I am so aggrieved with mine own Infirmary, as I am not able to endure that Light; and because whatever I meditate of the Heavenly Glory, is both so very short in Duration, and so overclouded with Obscurity.

VI. Wherefore I often repeat my Groaning, as it were dolefully singing: And while they daily say unto me; Where is now thy God? My Spirit is more

and more pierced and contrite. For in great suspense I ponder and ruminatè, Ah! Where is my Good, and the perfect Joy of my Heart? Ah! Where is Peace, and true Rest? Where O where are all these unutterable Benefits, but in my God? And when shall I enjoy them, but when I shall be united to him, without the Interposition of any dark Medium? And when shall this be? O when shall I be there? I Believe, I Hope; But I possess not.

Where then is my God, whom I so Love, and Behold not; whose Love so often wounded me; whose Absence so troubleth me; but whose Visitation also now and then refresheth me? Where is my God, whom even once to have seen, is to have learnt all things? Where is my God, in whom my Heart is fixed, and after whom even my Flesh longeth?

Where is my God, for whose sake I undergo so many Labours, and so many Sorrows? Ah! where is my God, the very Remembrance of whom is so sweet, but whose Presence is dearer, driving away all Sorrow and Mourning from the Heart? Where is my Hope, and all my Boasting? Is it not in thee, O my God, the Health of my Countenance, and my Salvation? Where is my Treasure, and my Crown? Is it not in thee, my God, and in thy blessed Countenance?

Shew me thy Glory, and turn not away thy Face from me, so shall I cease to complain. If I dispute with thee a little, O take it not amiss! For earnest Love hath many wonderful Methods, with many subtil Devices. I am forced to Wait, and I am the more instigated to Desire: I am driven to Expect, and moved still to Long; yea, to Long more and more vehemently, and to Wrestle still on with more Earnestness and Importunity. And so this joyful Combat, this Lovely Duel, doth continue; and is carried on after a marvellous manner in the Soul, for the greater Display of the Wonders of Divine Love.

C H A P. XXII.

Of the Heavenly Country.

O LORD, *I have loved the Beauty of thy House; and the Place of the Habitation of thy Glory, Psal. xxvi. 8.*

I. **H**OW willingly, how gladly, I would be with thee, thou knowest full well, O my GOD! And how intimately I desire it, how intirely I long for it, I cannot sufficiently utter. Nor only do I seek for this, when it is ill with me; but also even when it is never so well. For what Prosperity soever I here enjoy, my Desire is still to be with thee: O how do I wish that it might be permitted me, whether it goeth ill or well with me in this World, to be more with thee: Yea, so to be with thee, as never to be separated more.

But how shall Satisfaction be given to my Desire? It tires me to be here; and yet of necessity I must: With thee fain would I be; but it is not as yet allowed me. I see no Remedy then, but that I patiently bear this Delay; and resign my Opinion and Choice to Thee absolutely. For why? Shall I be ready to repine and murmur, when thus it ought to be? No, far be this from me. For as much as many of God's Children have contentedly continued in this World, and yet their Hearts were in Heaven.

Now therefore, if thou, Lord, shalt be pleased to prolong here my Pilgrimage, I also am willing to obey, and abide, even as long as it shall be well-pleasing to thee. Nevertheless, that the affectionate Longing I have of being with thee may, in its continued Waiting, be the better contented and satisfied; I am inclined in the mean while to meditate at times some-

what concerning the Heavenly Mansion, and to confer with thee about the Beauty of thy House, and the Glory of thy Habitation.

Notwithstanding I do not presume hence to penetrate into the very least of those Joys, which thou, Lord, hast prepared for them that love thee; but I will only pick up a little here, and a little there, to reflect upon, wherewith my Affection, that is often miserably weighed down, and infected, with Earthly Things; may be again excited, and be raised up to the Hope of Life everlasting, and to the Contemplation of Celestial and Divine Objects.

II. O were that Day but once come, wherein the Joys of Heaven might ravish me away! How Joyful then at Heart should I be, and how happy should I think my self! O how Blessed then should I truly be, enjoying a continual Tranquillity, in Peace unmoveable! Then would there be no more any need of searching out any thing, since nothing would be then hid. O would to God that Day had but shined upon me! Whither then had I in the Light thereof been carried? Whither O my Soul, hadst thou in the Streams of this its Glorious Light, thus descending to thee, been ravished and transported! From thenceforth should I make no Inquiry for any thing, seeing no Secret could be longer kept in the Dark, but that all things would come to be beheld of me nakedly in God, as reflected from his Countenance. From thenceforth should I have no Thoughts of any thing beside; seeing I should be then wholly seiz'd and taken up with the Vision of his Majesty, as contemplating him Eye to Eye. No longer then should I spend my Years thus in Darknes: Nor walk among Shades in this gloomy Valley of Mortality. But who, O! who will bring me forth hence? Ah! when will this long wish'd-for Day arise, and I receive the Wings of the Everlasting Morning, being

set quite free from the Contagion of this Body of Darkneſs ! O Bleſſed and Happy Day ! O Glorious and Unſhaded Light, in which all things muſt needs be manifested as clear as the Sun !

But my preſent Life, alas, is as it were a Night. For I live now in the Night, not in the Day : And therefore no wonder is it, if ſometimes amongſt the Miſts or Clouds of this World's Glory my Sight be dazled. Nevertheleſs I will liſt up mine Eyes, looking from afar, and ſalute that holy City *Jeruſalem*, which is built up in the Heavens of Living Stones, namely, of Angels and Holy Men : And is ever full with the high Praises of God, and triumphant Shouts of Glory, wherewith they inceſſantly magnifie his Name.

Courage then my Soul ! Courage ! O ho my Soul ! Why loiter'eſt thou ? Up, Up ! Advance, I ſay, forward ; and having taken the Wings of *Deſires*, mount Upwards ; make no ſtay here ; fly away out from the Corporeal Senſes, tranſplant thy Self from the Viſible Figures of the World, to the Holy Habitation of God, to the New *Jeruſalem*, eſtabliſhed with perpetual Peace, crowned with Glory and Honour, and perfected with the aggregate Fulneſs of all Good Things.

III. Behold things ſtupendouſly Marvellous and Ineffable, the which it is not lawful or poſſible for Man to utter. The Senſe of Man receiveth not, the Underſtanding of Man reacheth not, how Glorious GOD is in his Saints, how Wonderful in his Majeſty.

Stretch forth thy Thought to the utmoſt ; ſtretch it forth with all thy might ; extend thy Cogitation, I ſay, to the higheſt Heights ; dilate thy Deſire into the perpetual Eternities ; and ſay with the Prophet, *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou holy City of God.*

Here whatever is deſired, is had ; and whatever is had, is ſecurely poſſeſſed. Here GOD is ſeen Face

to Face, clearly, and without a riddle ; not through a Glass, not by little Snatches, but most Evidently and Perspicuously, and this without any end.

Here the Blessed and All-glorious Trinity, in the inseparable Unity is known : Which by all the Citizens of Heaven, is Adored, Praised, and Blessed for evermore.

IV. Here is that only One, that One only Beloved, that singular Elect, more Precious than all the Riches that the Heart can ever wish for, the Desirable (the only Desirable) Treasure, my Lord JESUS CHRIST, the Immortal Bridegroom of the Church ; in whom are all the Treasures of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD, from the World indeed hidden, but to the Blessed above manifested.

O how pleasant here are all the Saints, before this Saint of Saints, the Holy One of Holies, the Lord their Holiness ; who is the Cause and Original of their Salvation ! For here he speaks not to them in Proverbs, but openly he shews them of the Father.

He is their Book, even that WORD, *which was in the Beginning with God*, both informing them of all things, and fulfilling in them all things ; so that no Glory can henceforth be wanting to them. For as they read in this Divine Book, that is now altogether Unseal'd, they can lack nothing they would wish to have ; all things, that are Good and Desirable here, are present with them. O happy, blessed, everlasting Glory ! Not proceeding from a short Superficial Representation, but from the Real Presence of GOD, in the Splendors and reflected Beauties of his Saints ! O most surpassing Glory, and Glory of Glories, which through the Glorified Humanity of the Lord Christ, is uninterruptedly here communicated to the whole Body of Saints and Angels in the Heavenly Places, as Incorporated under this their Head, the express Image of the Father's Glory ! Whom therefore with the Fa-
ther

ther they Adore as the only Spring of their Blessedness; being fast knit together in the Bond of one and the same Eternal Spirit, according to their goodly Orders and Hierarchies; all continually looking unto Him, the Author and Finisher of their Perfection in Light, through whom all the Lights, Glories and Beauties of that Celestial Country are convey'd and transmitted, in all Eternity, as from a Source never to be exhausted.

V. Here are *Angels* and Archangels, here are Cherubims and Seraphims, all in their Glorious Orders placed; cheerfully intent on the Divine Praises; in their distinct Hierarchies and Stations, all continually exercised, without any Interruption, to perform and execute the Commands of *Eternal Love*, and to do in all things perfectly the Will of Him, in whom they live, move, and subsist, as Flames of Fire sparkling forth from the Glory of his Majesty.

Here are the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, who in old time, being full of the Holy Ghost, sang before of the Coming of Christ; whom now they Behold, whom now they Adore, and with paying their uncessant Homages of Praise, do Recognize, as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Now they see Eye to Eye their Redeemer, whom they long waited for, and desired with all their Heart that he might come.

Here is also the most Glorious Mother of our Saviour, the blessed *Virgin Mary*, beautifying the whole Heavenly Court with her Comeliness and Beauty; compassed with Troops of Virgins, as with sweet Roses and Lillies of the Vallies.

Here are the Illustrious and most Venerable Heralds of Christ, the Disciples and *Apostles* of our Lord, who were filled with Holiness and Grace, and made the Founders under Him of the Catholick Faith, and Pillars of the Church. To keep whose Faith, and

to imitate whose Example, is the ready way to arrive at Everlasting Life.

Here is the Glorious Army of *Martyrs*, all clad as in Royal Purple, through the radiant Tincture of their own Blood, together with the Blood of the LAMB, with whom they eternally Reign in all Bliss; whose Bodies being most cruelly Butcher'd, yet could not their Souls be separated through Torments from CHRIST: For Love in them was stronger than Death.

Here most brightly do shine the noble Fellowship of *Confessors*, who despising the Earthly, have obtained the Heavenly Life: And esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than all the Treasures in this World, have obtained the Immortal Riches, and an unfadable Diadem of Glory.

Here are the Eminent and Glorious *Pastors* of the Church, Lights in their Generation, the Teachers of Truth; who, by the Holiness of their Lives, having arrived to a more than ordinary Degree of Heavenly Contemplation, and to some nearer Converses with God, have thence left behind them in their Writings a lively Image of that holy Frame, into which they were Regenerated by the Spirit and Power of God.

And here, lastly, are both *Young Men and Maidens, Old Men and Children*, continually Praising the Name of the Lord together; whose Name they will only have to be Excellent, and to be exalted above Heaven and Earth: Ascribing to the Divine Majesty whatever they did in this Life, through his Grace, that was Good or Virtuous; always Thankful, always Devout, always Pleasant, and always Inflamed in rapturous Ardours; never weary, or tired; but by perpetual Contemplation raised up as into God; and so made to participate with Him in the Glories of his Light and Love.

O how

O how Glorious is this Kingdom, wherein, with Christ, all the Saints do reign, being clothed with their *First Robe*, and secure of that which is to follow! Here they now follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth; forasmuch as there shall be no Separation from him, but to all Eternity rejoicing they shall rejoice in the Lord.

VI. These things contemplate thou, O my Soul: And suspend thy Thought from and above all Visibleness. Surely this Place is Holy, and the Lord is in it. Here Peace and Joy always abound; here is the Affluence of all good things, and the Absence of all Evil; and this too is perpetual as to both.

O that thou couldest therefore but * snatch a little, but savour a little, but take in a little, of some little Portion of the unutterable Joys of the Saints! That so thereby thy Pilgrimage might be somewhat eased, and comforted! For here, alas, with this Body, thou shalt otherwise find nothing but Labours and Grievs, Storms of Temptations and Floods of the World, and indeed all manner of most melancholy dismal Scenes. Whereas if thou couldest even a little comprehend of their unspeakable Joys, then shouldest thou doubtless find Consolation sufficient for the Day.

O that the Author of Supernal Light would but vouchsafe to inspire somewhat hereof into thee, and that he would not send thee, my Soul, back empty to my course and dry Fare: But that according to the Riches of his superabundant Grace, he would purify thee from all Material Forms, wholly evacuate and empty thee from them; and lead thee into the Abyss of his Eternal Charity! Oh, if it were but now, at least for a Glimpse!

* *Rapere* al. *capere*, al. *sapere*.

O would to God thou mightest bring back from out of the Celestial Sanctuary that Form and Exemplar of true Holiness, which thou may'st imitate! For better and truer are the Patterns and Exemplars of the Heavenly things themselves, than what by any Earthly Demonstrations can be made out.

Grant me, O Lord God, therefore to taste and understand, what the perfect Felicity of thy Saints is, not so much by Books, which may be written with this Aim; as by thy Holy Spirit, who instructeth concerning the Heavenly Secrets, above all that Human Sense can reach unto.

And grant me also Power wherewith to elevate more ardently and fervently my Life to the more Spiritual Objects; and, amidst the frequent Weights and Burthens of Tribulation, valiantly henceforth to hold fast and keep the Palm of Patience; till the Debt of the Flesh being paid, I may at length through thy Mercy arrive to that Blessedness, which I so earnestly do desire, and pant for.

C H A P. XXIII.

*Of the Approach to the Holy of Holies Christ Jesus,
King of Angels.*

Philothea reads.

*Thou art my King, and my God : Arise my Soul, come,
and * enter into the Place of the Wonderful Tabernacle,
even unto the House of G O D, Psal. xlv. 5. and
xlii. 4. V. L.*

I. *Phil.* **A**ND Reason good it is, that leaving all other things behind, thou do with humble Reverence press forward, to salute our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Saviour and Redeemer, who is the Head of every Principality and Power; the Joy and the Crown of all the Saints; the firm Hope and certain Expectation of all the Faithful.

He it is that hath made thee, and redeemed thee, He it is that for thee hath laboured, wrestled, and overcome. He, even he is thine Advocate, and the Propitiation for thy Sins.

He is thy Comforter, thy Guardian, and thy Governor. He is thy Overseer, thy Caterer, and thy Shepherd that feedeth thee. He is thy Beloved, the only One and Singular Beloved, that feedeth amongst the Lillies, and that longeth to rest between thy Breasts.

Who is there that ever hath done thee so great Benefits? Who, I pray, hath ever loved thee with so great and entire a Charity? Draw near then unto him: Yield thy self up to him. Open unto him thine Heart, unfold even thy hidden Secrets unto him, and

* *Ingrederere in locum tabernaculi admirabilis, usque and Domum Dei.*

enumerate before him distinctly all what thou hast kept a long while to thy self.

There is none that will better tell thee, or reveal to thee, what Hope or Counsel there may be for thee in the Management of Humane Affairs, which are continually subject to such Variety of Events: Or let thee see, how thou shouldest to thy best Advantage behave thy self in this World, in the which things fall out so strangely.

With him let thy Wishes and Desires be, and *in him let thy Counsels abide*. The Hope of Men is in vain; but he is the Establishment of Peace.

Through him shalt thou have Access to the Father: And *from him* all Grace is given to thee, and a greater Largeness still of Holy Power is infused.

Whether thou beest sad, or joyful, *to him* always have thou recourse. He is the Mirror of Life; he is the Standard of Righteousness. He is the Light of the Soul, even its never failing Light; the Love of Chastity and Virgin Bashfulness; the Joy of the Conscience, and the Delight and Peace of humble Minds.

For his sake easily wilt thou despise all whatever is accounted delicious and pleasant to the Senses: For his sake all things that are bitter and contrary will be rendred more tolerable, and being tolerated and supported in the Love of him will ever please.

And lastly, *of him, and through him, and to him are all things*. To him principally and ultimately every Intention, every Action, every Speech, every Reading, every Prayer, every Meditation and Speculation ought to be directed. Through him Salvation is bestowed on thee, and eternal Life prepared for thee.

For his sake thou shalt neither be afraid to die, nor refuse to live; because thou oughtest to trust to him in Faithfulness, and not to prefer any thing before the
the

the Honour, and Love of him. Draw near therefore now: And give Thanks to thy Redeemer.

II. *Theoph.* O most Sweet, most Lovely, most Amiable JESU! O thou altogether Lovely One, who art, than all the Lovely ones, far more Lovely, my sweetest, dearest Jesu! Most devoutly be thou greeted; most loftily be thou praised; and now and eternally by every Creature be thou most exceedingly blessed and adored. I salute thee, I love thee, I praise thee, I adore thee with Angels, and all the Company of Heaven.

O most Worthy, most Honourable, most Renowned Jesu! O Eternal Renowned Lord, and King of Glory, What Honour shall I ever repay unto thee? Oh, what shall I render unto thee again for all that thou hast done? Or what Sacrifice of Thanksgiving shall I make unto thee, in requital for those infinite Mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to me.

And could I find any thing which I might give thee, would it not be thine before I gave it? What therefore, shall I render to thee, O Lord? Little or nothing it is that I have. And can I sacrifice out of *Nothing*?

Accept however, I beseech thee, the Sacrifice of my Humility, Poverty and *Nothingness*: And let *All* be ascribed to thee, whatsoever thou hast been pleased to impart unto me. Accept, I say, this mine humble base and vile Offering, such as it is, at this time, for thine own infinite Mercies sake.

And let all the Choirs of Angels, waiting continually before thee, since I am not able to praise thee as I would, give thee for me immense Praises.

And let all the *Spirits of Just Men made perfect* do in like manner; with a lofty and joyful Shout, repeating the same, and echoing forth the Wonders of thy Mercy to me, thy most unworthy Creature.

III. But what then shall I my self do, to the Memory and Praise of thy most Holy Name? Many things I ought to do. In many I am bound, and very greatly obliged: Howbeit scarce am I sufficient even for the least.

I will read therefore as I can, concerning thee, my sweetest Jesu; I will write concerning thee; I will sing of thee; I will meditate of thee; I will contemplate on thee; I will work also for thee; and for thee too will I suffer. In thee will I rejoice, thee will I praise, thee will I magnifie, thee will I glorifie. And as it is most meet and right, I will adore thee, since thou art *my* GOD, in whom I have believed, whom I have loved, whom I have sought after, and whom always I have wished for.

Shew me then now some Sign for Good; yea some Token at least, that my Eyes shall see thy Beautiful Countenance in Heaven. At thy Feet I humbly prostrate my self for this end, earnestly deprecating all that I fear and stand obnoxious to; and meekly imploring with Tears thy Royal Clemency, so far as thou wouldest vouchsafe to be Gracious and Merciful toward me a Sinner.

Write my Name, O my sweet Saviour, in the Book of Life: Nor let that ever be blotted out, which thine own hand hath written therein. O, write there my Name, write it, Lord: What thou writest cannot but endure for ever.

But, Alas! alas! Unworthy am I, altogether unworthy, that thou shouldest vouchsafe to take such notice of me. Yet unworthy and unhappy as I am, Ah unhappy I! And most unlike those blessed Saints in whom heretofore thou hast been so greatly glorified; putting my Trust and Confidence notwithstanding in the superabundant Prerogative of thy Merits, O Lord Christ, I do meekly beseech and implore thy Grace, that I at least thereby may be but
numbered

numbered among the meanest and lowest of thy Heritage among the weakest and less honourable Members of thy Body, among the basest and the worst in the World's Eye of thy lowly Followers. O that I might but obtain to be counted and written even among the least of all thy little ones! O that I were but a *Door-keeper*, or any thing *less* than that, in the Courts of my God!

IV. Very well do I know, that my Life and Conversation is not such, as to give me the least ground of any Presumption as to this in my self, but matter rather of all Discouragement. Lord it is not in me, but *in thee*, and in thy Merits only. And therefore my whole Hope and entire Consolation do purely consist in the Price of thy most precious Blood; and as they flow *from*, so do they rest *in* that alone: Wherein I do wholly repose my self, deeming it most highly requisite that I should do so, together with all whatever I have at any time done, be it good or be it evil; with all whatever I have committed, or even omitted; with all wherein I have offended, and all wherein I may have at any time pleased.

Behold therefore my Littleness and my Indigence, most Gracious Jesu; and attend thou to the Affection of this wounded Heart, which I bear towards thee; not because I am worthy, but because thou art worthy and canst make me, if thou pleasest, worthy too: O Behold my Baseness and my Humiliation, and consider thou the driving of my Heart, and the sighing thereof; yet not for any Meritoriousness which is in me, but for the mere Bountifulness which is in thee; even for the sake of thy most bounteous Loving Kindness, and endless Mercy, O thou who disdainest not to be touched, and loved, by the unworthy!

In respect of mine Unworthiness, I am yet greatly still ashamed, Lord, to come into thy Presence. My Impurity affrightens me, and strikes me with Terrour;
but

but then again I am drawn and allured to thee by the exceeding great and Sovereign Pity, and most condescending Humility of Love; which made thee consent not only to become Man, but also to suffer, die, and be buried for sinful Man; in true and perfect Charity for us; bearing, believing, hoping, and patiently enduring for my sake. Oh! Was there ever Love, was there ever Humility, like to this Love and this Humility?

And hence unto thee do I flee; because in my self I find nothing that Good is. Do thou supply for me what my Strength is little able to affect.

V. Thou, Lord, hast given me a Desire, to pray unto thee, to praise thee, and to bless thee; for thou art my Hope and *my Portion in the Land of the Living*.

The Desire of my Soul is to be with thee in the Kingdom of Heaven; but because my time is not yet, I will wait for thee even till the Evening.

In the mean while, let this be my Consolation in the Place of my Pilgrimage, that I am mindful of thy Name, and of thine exceeding great Love and Charity; and that I behold thee in this Life by the Eyes of my Faith.

Altogether intolerable would it otherwise be for me to live in this World, if I had not Hope in thee, Lord. For I am not free to rejoice with the World; And that I might not remain without all Comfort and Joy, have I placed my Joy therefore in Thee.

Much and often should I go astray, much should I fluctuate in my Thoughts, and waver to and fro; unless I kept thee in my Memory and my Imagination.

And because I am not able to reach the Height of thy Divinity, nor sufficient to comprehend the incorporeal Truth; more safely do I turn my self to the Holy Acts and Sayings of thy Humanity; forasmuch as while I think on these, I do not at all recede hereby from thy Divinity.

Thanks,

Thanks, Thanks now be to thee, *Good Jesu!* Thanks to thee, *Sweet Jesu!* Thanks to thee, most *Lovely* and *Beloved* Jesu! Thanks to thee, I say; all Thanks to thee be given for that thou hast vouchsafed thus to become my Brother, my Bone, and my Flesh. Glory be to thee, O Lamb of God, Son of the Father, for that entring into the Womb of *Mary* thy Mother, thou didst of her Virgin Flesh take the Holy Members of thy Body, for my Sake, uniting them unto thy Divine Nature.

CHAP. XXIV.

Thanksgiving to GOD.

Theophilus and the Beloved.

Blessed be the Lord God, even the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous Things: And blessed be the Name of his Majesty for ever, Psal. lxxii. 18, 19.

Theoph. **B**lessed be thy Glorious Name, O Lord, for ever and ever. And may all be to thy Service, and to the Honour of this thy Name, whatsoever I Do, or Read, or Write; yea, all what I ever Think, or Speak, or Understand. Let all my Work begin from thee, O Lord my God; and let it all through thee and in thee be ended. What thou hast given the same do thou receive; and to the Place from whence they come, let the Rivers return. And indeed whatever is by me either done or thought aright, I can make no manner of account of, but just so far as it proceeds from, and terminates in Thee, my dearest, sweetest Lord. Nothing doth ever please me better, or relish with a finer Gust, than to have

Thee in every thing for my Object and End, and in every thing always to acknowledge and adhere to thee, the great and sovereign Good. Nothing of what I do, or speak, or think, in the way of thy Righteousness, is so well, or so favoury, as when I sincerely surrender it all back, and my self too, and that not in part, but wholly to Thee : For, lo ! I am nothing without Thee ; and I *have* nothing but from Thee, O my God and my All. Wherefore most just is thy Claim to me, even to all of me, and to all what is abusively called *mine* : For thou indeed considerest that I am nothing of my self, if not even a degree lower and worse ; and that I *can* do nothing of my self, but as thou assistest me, and workest with me and in me. Take then to thy self, dear Lord, what is thy own undoubted due : Take all that I am, all that I have, and all that I can do. Nothing but thine own do I give thee ; and this is all the Thanks that I am able to repay thee. Fain would I give thee Thanks : But how shall this be ? Or what Tribute shall I pay unto thee, my King and my God ? What shall I render unto thee ? What shall an evil and a slothful Servant, a vile little Wretch, render unto thee, Great God ! Nothing ; mere Nothing is my Service, should I even do all whatever thou hast commanded. For what is my Righteousness unto thee ? Therefore am I reduced to nought : And my Humiliation is great, as thou knowest right well, so that I am not able to look up ; for according to Truth, and in the Truth I am humbled. And it is *good for me that thou hast humbled me*, that so thou alone mayst be justified, thou alone mayst be praised of all, and that poor vile Dust may never boast more in it self. Nevertheless I will not desist for this, but will praise thee with my Heart and my Voice ; since if I cannot perform it worthily, it is yet a thing most unworthy to be altogether silent, and to make no kind of Acknowledgment. O that I could
but

but praise thee, and give thee Thanks, as I desire to do, and as by the Blessed Spirits in Heaven is continually done! Fain would I sing unto thee, O thou holy One, and speak of thy Righteousness and thy Salvation. How do I burn, to be telling of what great things they are that thou hast done! O who is like unto thee? Thou art my Praise, O my God; and in thee shall my Song be always.

II. He that hath perceived but a little of thy Glory, and what it is to glory in thee, O how will he despise, trample, and account as Dung all the deceitful Glory of this World! He that hath tasted but a little of thy Sweetness, O how soon will all Earthly Delight turn bitter to him! He that hath participated but a little of the hidden Riches, which thou communicatest, O how will he account for nothing all the Riches of this outward Principle! O how would such an one burn, as hath received even but a Spark of thy Love and Charity! For he would most gladly condemn all things, that he might cleave to thy Love: And every thing that he could either do or suffer, for the Love of thee, how hard soever, would be to him most easy and delightful. Nothing would be difficult to him, nothing painful to such an one, in whose Breast thy sweet Fire burns, which irresistibly makes its way, bearing all before it softly and without Noise. O how would he dance and sing for Joy, how would his Heart leap and exult; how eagerly, vehemently, uncessantly would he run after thee; mindful of all thy Benefits and Graces, and cheerfully reflecting on all the Good of every kind flowing forth from thee, the Fountain of Lights and Beauties! Nothing would he ever seek with more Affection, nothing would he ever hold with greater Contentment; nothing would be more dear to him in the Pursuit, or more happy in the Acquisition, than to be in a Condition of doing somewhat for thy Sake, or of bearing

somewhat for thy Love purely. O how greedily would he even hunt after Occasions, and catch at Opportunities of serving Thee and thy Love, by all possible Means and Methods ! For inasmuch as he loveth, he would never at all feel the Burthen ; because Love would carry all Burthens. And hence they who complain of the Burthen, do thereby shew themselves not to have advanced very far in Love. For it is an infallible Maxim, that *Love beareth all things*. And nothing in the World is so pleasant as the Service of Love. To serve and obey thee out of a Principle of Love (O my God and my Love) is exceeding delightful, and sweeter even than Honey or the Honey-comb : It is the Melody of the Heart, the Ease of Pains, and the Refreshment of Labours. Love regardeth not its own Convenience, nor feareth to suffer Inconvenience ; but seeketh in all things thy good Pleasure, and none but that. Love joyfully for thy Sake, in Faith and Hope, *endureth all things*.

III. O how sweet a thing is thy Love ! how charming sweet is it, O Christ ! how pleasantly doth it sound, how deliciously doth it enter, how forcibly doth it hold, how exaltingly doth it compress, and how strongly bind ! O that it would oblige, and fast bind me to thy perpetual Service, that it would seize and fill me wholly, that it would reduce and subdue me absolutely, and would appropriate me entirely to thee, as thy most peculiar Property and Heritage ! For then am I most at Liberty, when captivated by thy Love ; and then richest, when deprived of all Property, and alienated of what was counted my own. I am never free, but by being thy Servant ; I am never rich, but by owning nothing. Thy Servant, LORD, I am : Thine, I say ; for thou hast purchas'd, dearly purchas'd me. Thine, Thine I am, dear Lord, not mine own. And glad with all my Heart am I thus to be thine : Nor am I in the least ashamed to
appertain

appertain to thee in full Propriety, as impropriated altogether from what I was, and possessing nothing in my self, or for my self. I am not willing at all to be at my own Disposall; I would not be my own again for never so much, since I am now thine, sweetest Lord: O help me still to become more and more thine; till at length, taken out of my self, I be taken into thee, the Rock and Fountain of my Being. Yea, help thou me, for thy Name's sake, that so, through thy Grace, I may be quite set free, both from my own base *Liberty* and false *Property*. Since what else is my Liberty but perfect Slavery, and my Property but the worst of Beggary? Make haste therefore to deliver me from one and the other, good Lord: that so I may possess the true Liberty, which is that of thy Children; and may *inherit Substance*, by being evacuated of all Self-Propriety, and becoming thy sole Property in consequent hereof. For this End do thou blow upon and quicken the little Spark of Fire that is in me: Do thou enkindle, fan and stir up that which lies as cover'd under the Ashes, so shall my Heart wax hot, and shall be made pure, and be undefiled in thy Sight. This internal and spiritual Fire, blown up by thee, shall soon brighten and clarify it, shall exalt it to very high degrees of Celestiality, and shall render it wondrously lovely, joyful and pleasant. For thy Love, O my sweet Saviour, is a Fire that burns up all the Dross, and devours every Thorn and Briar in the corrupt Field of Nature: it slays every Vice, it consumes every Sin, it scatters every Pain. O Holy and Blessed Fire burn in my Heart yet more vehemently, till I even expire in thy Flames, they are so rapturously sweet. O sacred Bond of Love, bind me fast to thy self. O irresistible Charm of Love, bind in me all that would oppose thee: Bind me, chain me, hold me; so shall my poor Service stand, and be accepted.

VI. Nor am I ignorant, how that my Service can be of no Advantage to thee, O Lord : but to me it is no small Advantage and Profit, if I perform what I know to be grateful to thee. O that I might do it accordingly, and not hold my Peace : that I might speak, and not hide thy Works. For when shall I be sufficient worthily to think upon and recollect all those Benefits which thou hast bountifully conferr'd on me unworthy one ? Great is thy Mercy which thou hast shewed, O Lord, unto thy Servant : but as for me, Woe is me ! I have not dealt by thee as thou hast deserved at my Hands ! I have not made, alas ! any suitable Returns to those strong and numerous Engagements I have Day by Day received from thee, who art the very Life and Health of my Soul, even my God, and my Rock. And for this have Pains laid hold on me, and Dolours of Heart seize me at this present ; because I am not able to answer thee for thy Benefits, they are both so many and so great. Ah ! how fain would I that even but once I could worthily and entirely render thee an Acknowledgment for all these. But there where there is nothing, what can be expected to come out ? An empty Glass sure none can drink any thing out of. What therefore shall I do ? To give somewhat there is all the Obligation possible : Give I must something or other ; for it is not lawful for me to appear before thee empty. The Reason is, thou lovest a grateful Heart ; but the ungrateful thou hast no Pleasure in : and every one that is forgetful of what he has receiv'd, shall be himself also forgotten and pass'd by in the Hour of Visitation.

V. O that I had but any thing in the whole World that I could give, and that might be acceptable in thine Eyes ! What wilt thou have, O my Beloved Lord ? For no need hast thou of any of my Goods. What carest thou for Thousands of Rams, or ten
Thou-

Thousands of Rivers of Oil? Thou needest not these, or the Fruit of my Body; why then requirest thou of me a Gift? There is none richer than thy self, and yet askest thou of me?

The BELOVED. “ My Pleasure it is to have the
“ *Whole.* For this is expedient for thee, if thou
“ wilt take the way to obtain my Grace. I will give
“ thee Grace, and thou shalt render me again Graces
“ and Thanks; and so will we both maintain a
“ mutual Love and Familiarity constantly together.
“ Give but thy self to me, my Son, and thou hast gi-
“ ven the whole.

Theophilus. O Jesu, the Fountain of all Good, the Fountain of Life, the Fountain of Grace; O Jesu, the Fountain of Sweetness, Fountain of Eternal Wisdom, and immense Ocean of Truth and Righteousness! pour down now into me the Gift of thy Heavenly Grace, according to thy most tender Mercies: and teach me now always to give thee Thanks, and above all, to give my self to thee; because there is nothing more dear, that I am capable to render thee.

The BELOVED. “ Give thy self, I say to me;
“ then hast thou given the Whole.

Theophilus. This I feel and understand, and here do give with all my full Consent. Take me: lo! I am thine wholly, all thine; and all that mine is, is thine too.

The BELOVED. “ ’Tis agreed; and thou art
“ mine.

Theophilus. But one thing yet there is, my Lord, that I cannot render to thee: yea, that I must not render to thee.

The BELOVED. “ What is that?

Theophilus. ’Tis my Sin which is solely and properly my own, and therefore not to be imputed to thee. Mine be the Sin; and every Fault that can be

found in me, to me alone let it be attributed ; but unto thee Glory and Honour and Thanksgiving for all thy Benefits.

The BELOVED. “ Nay, let mine be the Sin also ;
 “ and cast thou, my dear Soul, every Fault by thee
 “ committed, and the whole Burden of thine Iniquity
 “ upon me. I, even I, was wounded for thy Trans-
 “ gression : I have taken the Load thereof from thee
 “ upon my self ; the Chastisement of thy Peace being
 “ upon me thy Saviour. Surely I bear all thy Grievs,
 “ and carry all thy Sorrows : therefore fear not ; but
 “ cast thou all upon me. I am sufficient, and I *alone*
 “ am sufficient to bear all.

Theophilus. According to thy Will, O Lord, then even so let it be. But O the Wonders of thy Love ! how shall I declare or speak of them ? O the unsearchable Riches of thy Mercy ! O the deep and unutterable Compassions of thy Bowels ! Blessed, thrice blessed therefore be the Name of thy Majesty for ever ; and let all the Earth be filled with thy Glory.

VI. Bless the Lord, O my Soul, for all his Benefits : and try if thou canst express his noble Acts, or but a little stammer forth those great and glorious Wonders he hath done for thee, even for thee most vile unworthy one. My Heart is ready ; but, alas ! I flag : My Heart is now ready ; but, Oh me ! I immediately faint, and falter, and sink down, I am so overwhelm'd with the exuberant Greatness of the Divine Charity towards the Children of Men in general, and towards me in particular. Nevertheless I will secretly ponder these things, and will sing and give praise as I can ; remembring the times past, and musing upon all the Works of my God. O Lord my God, I will tell of thy Greatness and Majesty : and the Memorials of thine abundant Kindness fain would I shew forth, and honourably declare ; that so with me Multitudes might sing of thy Righteousness, and
 of

of thy Truth. And now in order to a more particular commemorating of thy Benefits, I shall out of many take a few, even such as are most eminent and affecting. For to search through them all, neither would Time permit, nor would the Mind indeed be able to do it. Since if I consider their Numerousness, it exceeds Arithmetick. But if I consider their Greatness, it far over-bears the Capacity of the Human Mind. And if their Worth, they are without Price, and above all Price. In a Word, they are Numberless, Unmeasurable, Unvaluable. And because they are Unvaluable, as well as without Number and Measure, how vain a thing must it be for any to go about to buy or merit these? O let me never attempt such Folly as this! Never, never may I so dishonour thee my God, eternally overflowing Fountain of Good! For I know, they are given by thee most gratuitously, and that nothing is required in lieu thereof but grateful Remembrances, and Acknowledgments only. I have received them all *gratis* of thy Mercy; for bought or purchas'd they cannot be at any rate; and therefore, and afore all things I thank thee, O Lord of Heaven and Earth, the Fountain of all Goodness, Grace and Sweetness. Otherwise all would be taken away, as from the ungrateful one in the Parable. Wherefore my Soul blesteth thee, according to my bounden Duty, and ever shall continue to bless thee, O everlasting Spring of Felicity, for all thy Mercies, Graces, and Benefits so freely conferred upon me thy poor wretched Creature; singing *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,* as it ever was, and is, and ever will be to all Eternity.

Acts of Thanksgivings.

§. I. *For Creation.*

Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory and Honour, for thou hast created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were created.

IN the first Place therefore I give Thanks to thee, O Lord my God, Maker of all things, for that thou hast vouchsafed to create me a Man, endued with Rational Powers ; and to appoint me over the Works of thy Hands, as to my Soul made after thy Image and Likeness. This is the *First* and Great Benefit of thy mere and free Goodness conferr'd upon me. Since that I made not my self, but thou madest me, introducing me into the World by the means of my Parents, whom thou didst ordain to serve thee herein. And lo ! I am made more excellent in Body, as well as in Soul, than the rest of my Fellow-Creatures ; and am preferred before all the Beasts of the Field, and the Fowls of the Air, because form'd after the Image of God. I am capable of the Eternal Wisdom, and naturally Partaker of the uncreated Light and immutable Truth. For all therefore whatever I am, for all the Powers of the sensitive Life, for all the superiour Springs which I enjoy, even for all the Seeds in me of Reason and Understanding ; I render thee perpetual Thanks, wishing and begging that all Creatures at once, both they that are in Heaven and in Earth, may praise together thy wondrous Name, so exceeding admirable and highly to be exalted above all for ever. I bless thee, O Father, and Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast created all things out of nothing, thro' thy only begotten Son, in the Holy Ghost. Not out
of

of any Necessity, but of thy own mere Will and free Choice hast thou created all things, that so thou mightest manifest thy Power to the Children of Men: and hast disposed this visible World in the very best manner, through the invisible Wisdom, Co-eternal with thee. O may all thy Creatures bless thee, obeying thee in all things, graciously by thee design'd for the Service of Mankind. For at thy Command, O Lord, the Heaven gives its fructifying Showers, according to the Seasons; and the Earth brings forth abundance of Fruit. The Sun and the Moon shine clearly upon the Earth; the Stars in their Courses by Night fulfil thy Order. The Fountains and Rivers flow; and Fishes of sundry kinds swim and play in the Streams thereof. The Birds of the Air do fly and sing: upon the Mountains the young Roes and the Harts do skip; and the Hills are a Refuge for the wild Goats. Thou waterest them from above, and the whole Earth is filled with the Fruit of thy Works. Thou bringest Food out thence, and Wine that makes glad the Heart of Man, with Oil to make him a chearful Countenance, and Bread to strengthen his Heart. All Beasts of the Field, and the Lions roaring after their Prey, do seek their Meat from thee. The Meadows are green, the Fields flourish, and the Trees of the Lord are full of Sap, even the Cedars of *Libanus*. These all are the Works of thine Hands, O God, who only doest wondrous things. All thy Works praise thee; and Day unto Day utters Speech, declaring thy excellent Glory; while Night also unto Night sheweth Knowledge, speaking forth thy handy Work. How comest thou forth as a Bridegroom out of thy Chamber, and rejoicest as a strong Man to run a Race, filling all Nature, and making thy Circuit unto the Ends of it; there being nothing hid from the vital Heat of thy Love, O God of Love! All thy Works are perfect in their Order;
and

and thy Line that is stretched over them is the Perfection of all Perfection : therefore shall they all praise thee, and in all shall thy Name be greatly magnified and extolled.

§. II. *For Redemption.*

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.

THE *Second* Benefit exhibited to me is the Mystery of the *Incarnation*, the Work of Redemption, and the Price of Mens Salvation ; which is the Fruit of thy Death and Passion, my dearest Saviour. O great Work of Mercy ! O Work of most excellent Charity, of supreme Humility, and of singular Patience ! This verily Man deserved not ; this none of the Angels could perform ; this the Prophets had however a Prospect of ; this the Apostles have seen and taught ; this all the Faithful have embraced ; and this the choicest Souls, thy Spouses, do chiefly delight in, and do meditate upon : This Benefit duly ponder'd excites the Desires, enflames the Heart, nourishes Devotion, enlightens the Mind, purges the Affection, attracts to Heaven, retracts from the World, leads to Christ, and unites the Soul with God. This Gift is super-abundantly greater than the former ; yet it is one that gave and effected them both, even Jesus Christ, the Lord our God. For to have been born into the World would have been no manner of Advantage to me, but only so far as it is made so by the Price of this my dear Saviour's Redeeming Blood. Grace therefore succoured me, and the Divine Mercy as it were shot forth it self ; and thus was wrought out

out a plentiful Redemption : since Nature was so vi-
 tiated, that it was wholly impossible ever to be re-
 paired without the Aid of the Creator himself.

“ O Father of Mercies, and God of all Consolati-
 “ ons, how hast thou, to ransom a condemned Slave,
 “ delivered up thine own Son. Thou, to redeem
 “ the Sons and Daughters of Death, hast given even
 “ thine onely Son to the Death. O wonderful Vouch-
 “ safement of thy Pity towards Man in his lost Estate :
 “ most wonderful and amazing Condescension of thy
 “ merciful Love, which neither the Reason of Men,
 “ or Understanding of Angels is able to unfold !
 “ Glory therefore be to thee, yea, all Glory and all
 “ Love be to thee, O Lord God, my Heavenly Fa-
 “ ther, who first hast loved me, and made me ac-
 “ cepted in the Beloved !

“ O sweetest, kindest Jesu, the Beginning and the
 “ End of our Salvation, thou only knewest how,
 “ who only wast able, to bring Help to the Misera-
 “ ble, and Life to the Prisoners of Death. For in
 “ the most horrible and abject Form of a Servant,
 “ thou didst not disdain to appear unto them ; but
 “ didst most readily and gladly undertake, for the
 “ Sake of such poor little despicable mortal Worms,
 “ to put thy self even in their stead ; and so, out
 “ of the mere Motion of thy commiserating Charity,
 “ to submit to the Sentence of a direful Death for
 “ their Releasement. O Jesu, the Fountain of Good-
 “ ness and of Mercy, the Source of tenderest Com-
 “ passions, the Eternal Light of Eternal Light, and
 “ unspotted Mirror of the Divine Majesty, do thou
 “ enflame my Heart with the Meditation of this un-
 “ utterable Benefit, which thou hast vouchsafed to
 “ confer upon me and upon all Mankind.

This is a general Benefit as well as the former,
 which for all is sufficient to Salvation, but not in
 all efficacious to produce Fruit, by reason of the In-
 fidelity

fidelity and Malice of many. But to all the Faithful it fully answers the Ends, bringing forth in them good and holy Fruits ; for whose Sake all things were created, and be, as I may say, created again, through thee, O Christ my Saviour.

“ O Gracious Jesu, what great and manifold Benefits hast thou bestowed upon us in thy Humanity !
 “ Thou art become our Brother and our Flesh, that
 “ we might be accounted Sons of God, and might
 “ have Access *through thee* to the Father, whose offended Justice none was worthy to appease, but
 “ thou alone ; of whom he himself once said, *This*
 “ *is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Happy is that Soul which zealously and studiously recollects the Mysteries of our Redemption, affectionately loves them, duly reverences them, and gratefully gives Thanks for them ; and finally depends rather upon thy Counsel, than upon her own Sense. For there is not any one that is capable of searching out this Mystery of himself, nor is it by Human Wisdom attainable ; but rather by the Strength of Faith, and by the Eye of a pure Heart enlightened from above. Blessed is he, who is accounted worthy to receive through Grace, what the Wise of the World have not been able to learn through Nature.

“ O Jesu, the Wisdom of the Father, make me to
 “ understand, in the Light of Faith, this great and
 “ marvellous Mystery of thy Incarnation. Because
 “ therein the whole Sweetness of our Salvation in an
 “ hidden manner lies, the greatest Charity abounds,
 “ the rarest Friendship that ever was seen appears,
 “ and the Fulness of thy unsearchable Wisdom shines
 “ most gloriously. May thy Servant continually improve by the Arguments of Virtues, and by the
 “ Studies of sincere Holiness, and be more and more
 “ instructed in this secret and recondite Memorial of
 “ thy Incarnation, together with that profound one
 “ of

“ of thy sacred Passion : And may I be drawn tho-
“ roughly into the most private and intimate Reces-
“ ses of thy mysterious Love. O most deep Abyss
“ hereof ! O Divine Ocean of so great Charity, im-
“ mense Gulph of so great Vouchsafement, bottom-
“ less and boundless Sea of such condescending Love,
“ as never can be by any fadomed, or by any forded
“ over ; wherein the Spiritual Fishes , great and
“ small, which thou hast caught within the Net of
“ Faith, do swim to and fro. O may such Charity
“ and Sweetness, such Humility and Meekness, such
“ Gentleness, such Condescension, such Patience, a-
“ bide always in my Remembrance : and in every
“ Sacrifice of Prayer, and every Exercise of Medita-
“ tion, may there somewhat still intervene and min-
“ gle it self therewith of the Mystery of the Incar-
“ nation and Passion, as a most bright shining In-
“ cense, and a most pleasant odoriferous Balsom, for
“ a sweet Savour, to be offer’d up to God the Father !

Let all the Redeemed of the Lord, whom he hath
redeem’d from the Hand of the Enemy, sing out now
with the Song of Divine Praise : and let them pay
with Thanksgiving an Hymn of internal and spiritual
Jubilee : yea, also let all the Angels standing round
about the Throne, fall down upon their Faces, and
worship the Lamb of God who taketh away the Sins
of the World ; saying,

“ Praise and Honour becometh thee, O Lord. Blef-
“ sing and Glory, giving of Thanks, and the Voice
“ of Praise, Strength and Empire, Majesty and Wis-
“ dom be unto our Lord God, and unto the Lamb for
“ ever and ever. *Amen.*

§. III. *For Justification : or, Sanctification.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly Places in Christ.

THE *third* grand Benefit, not inferiour to both the former, is the Grace of *Justification* ; whereby thou hast graciously drawn me to Conversion and Reformation of Life ; giving me Repentance for my Sins, the Hope of Pardon, and the Purpose of Well-doing, and of persevering to the end in thy Service. Which Blessed *Paul* clearly considering, exhorts his Disciples that they be not either unmindful of, or ungrateful for so great a Benefit : but that being careful of the Heavenly Grace, they may endeavour and study how to return Praises worthy of so high a Calling. See your Calling, Brethren, saith he, how that not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called : but the foolish and weak things of the World hath God chosen. And wherefore hath he chosen such, but that he may the better hereby confound the wise and mighty, and that no Flesh may boast in his Presence. These things now I consider, as to my self, who being unprofitable to this World, and by it accounted base and contemptible, am through thy Holy Call snatch'd away from out of its Wreck, and translated into the Fellowship of thy Saints, that I might serve and worship thee, my Lord and my God, without Fear, in that most sacred and blessed Communion. And that I might not go backwards again, I freely and of my own Accord bound my self with thy gracious Help to persevere unto the Death. Which I ascribe not to my Merits, or to any Goodness of mine, but to thy Providence wholly. For which I offer unto thee,

thee, O my God, O my Love, all magnificent Praise, and high Blessing ; in that thou hast been pleased to *call* me through thy Grace, giving me at the same time a good Will to follow thee, and casting away from me the Load of my Sins, which so mightily hindred and kept me back. For thou hast brought me under thy easy Yoke ; by the Assistance and Union of thy Spirit, which the World knoweth not, neither seeth, nor understandeth, breaking and mollifying my Mind, that so I may continue to labour under the same with much Quiet and Satisfaction. Grant, I beseech thee, merciful Lord, that this Grace of thine may always prevent and follow me, and make me continually to observe and obey thy godly Motions in Righteousness and true Holiness, to thy sole Honour and Glory ; and that being thus gently and pleasantly yoked, according to the Desire of my Heart, I may in all things walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith I am *called*, with all Lowliness, Meekness and Long-suffering. And forasmuch as thou hast given me an hearty Desire to serve and love thee, do thou both continue and fulfil the same ; strengthen what thou hast grafted in me by thy good Spirit, keep it mightily from the Danger of the Enemy, and uphold me in every Temptation ; and because without thee I cannot but fall, sustain me ever by thy present Help. Set a Guard upon my Heart, and as long as I am in the Light of this World, encrease more and more to me the Gifts of thy Grace, that I thereby may cheerfully accomplish all those things thou wouldest have done, and may according to the utmost Capacity of my Nature glorify thee upon the Earth.

This Divine Call I perceive, and experimentally feel, to be indeed a great and special Benefit, not given to all, but to them for whom it is prepared of the Father ; since it is not of him that willeth, or of him

that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy; that so every Mouth speaking vain things may be stopped, and every Man may be subject to thee, and no Flesh glory in thy Presence, nor arrogate to himself any thing of his own * Merits or good Works. For if according to Justice thou wouldest have dealt with me, I had now been numbred with them that are in Hell. But thy Mercy hath spared me, Lord, and thou hast given place to Indulgence, that I might not be like unto the Son of Eternal Perdition. Wherefore I am bound to render thee high Praises for so magnificent a Benefit: And O that I might worthily answer both in Word and Deed to all what thou hast so bountifully confer'd upon me, and might correspond with all thy Motions, and by a suitable Conformity with thy Requirings honour thee all the Days of my Life. Wherefore it is most meet, right, and my bounden Duty, that I should at all Times, and in all Places, and for all Things, give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, Almighty and Everlasting God: And accordingly I, thy unworthy Servant, do, with all my Fellow-Pilgrims and Exiles here, give thee most humble and hearty Thanks, for all thy Goodness and Loving-kindness to me, and to all Men. I bless thee, I praise thee, I glorify thee, O God of Love, for all thy Benefits; but above all, for this thy most inestimable Benefit, the Redemption of lost Mankind. Glory be to God as on high, so on Earth, Good Will towards Men. Let all the Angels waiting about the Throne, with the Holy Elders, and numberless Company of the Redeemed, at the great Redeemer's

* Hence it evidently appears, that notwithstanding this Author does frequently, yea continually, apply the Words *Mereri* and *Meritum* to Man, he never uses 'em in that Sense which Protestants commonly understand.

Name bow the Knee, fall down and worship before his Majesty ; saying, “ Praise, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanks, and Honour, and Power, and “ Might, be unto our Lord Jesus for ever-more.
“ *Amen.*

Now I beseech thee, O Sovereign Love, that for giving of Thanks, thou would be pleased to accept of my poor little Obeysance, wherewith I covet to serve thee, as lying under the highest Obligations of thy Charity so to do : And grant that the bounden Duty of my Service may radically proceed from, and finally tend to thy good Pleasure and Honour ; and that my Heart may never be turned aside from the Love of thee, but that my Soul and my Body together may in like manner vigorously proceed, grow, and persevere in thy most holy Service, as long as there is any Breath within me, or I have the Enjoyment of my Senses and Memory. Never may thy Praise be out of my Mouth ; nor the abundance of thy Loving-kindnesses ever depart from out of my Heart. And if it shall please thee that thy Servant shall live many Years, supposing that he was to live even an hundred or a thousand Years, yet shall he not therefore be cool'd or deter'd (I humbly trust) from waiting upon thee, or wearied out in the Duties of his Service to thee, O King of Saints, my Lord and my God, because thou art ever with him. O be thou ever with me, and take up thy Habitation in my Breast, that no Strangers may be able there to intrude again : And should my Life be never so long by thee protracted, yet suffer me not therefore to grow at any time indifferent or lukewarm ; but fan thou up, O King of Love and Peace, in me continually that holy Fire, which first came down from Heaven upon the Altar of my Heart, so as valiantly I may persist under all Tribulations and Temptations, resigned perfectly

to thy blessed Will; and may as devoutly and willingly, as fervently and chearfully, in all things serve and obey thee, as at the very first Hour and Moment when my Heart was touched of thee. O may there be the same Fervour, the same Alacrity, the same holy Boldness, without the least Detriment or Diminution, as was in the Beginning, when I was *called* by the sweet Odours of thy Grace, and made to run after thee, and for thee to forsake all besides! O blessed Day, blessed Hour, blessed Moment, when thou didst first touch my dead Heart, and command it to live; and didst then admonish and confirm it to follow thee the Lord only, even with a pure and perfect Mind! O my God and my Love, never may the same be once forgotten of me: O make me evermore to remember my first Love, and my first Works; and to hold fast to what I received from thee on the Day of my first * Espousals. For I have sworn, O Lord my God, and will, through thy Grace aiding, perform it, that I will keep thy most righteous Commandments, and take thy Testimonies as my Heritage for ever. Thy Love shall be the constant Byass of my Soul, the natural Spring and Weight of my Heart, the sole Rule and Guide of my Life: And thee will I follow, even unto the end, whither-

* *The Author here alludes to his Profession, and solemn Engagement to serve God under the Rule of St. Augustine; and it is said of him, that he was wont frequently to thank God for these four things; First, that he was born not among Infidels, but among Christians, and solemnly consecrated from his first Infancy to be a Disciple and Follower of Jesus Christ. Secondly, That he was born not only of Christian Parents, but those also that were Religious and Devout, and that had likewise but little of the World. Thirdly, That he wanted not the best Education that was then to be had for true Christian Piety, under the most experienced Tutors and Directors, but particularly for the Favour he found with Florentius: And, Lastly, that God had granted him to lead a Religious and Retired Life; according to the aforesaid Rule, Vit. beati Thomæ Mallcoli Tit. 3, &c. à Jo. Bad. Ascen.*

soever thou leadeſt ; ſince 'tis thou thy ſelf haſt wrought in me this Will. Glory be to thee, O God of Love.

Nor ſhall any Infirmity nor Adverſity, as I truſt, by its intervening, be able to hinder this Purpoſe, or ſhock this Reſolution of mine : But as I now feel, and in the hearing of thee my God at this time do purpoſe and declare ; ſo what is once gone out of my Lips, by thy ready Aid, I covet and hope to fulfil. But if nevertheless, through any Frailty or any Fault, this Will ſhould happen to be ſhatter'd, or this Purpoſe to be broken ; ſeeing there is not a Man upon Earth ſo righteous, as to live and ſin not, I will not yet deſpond at all, nor will I let thee go : But I will preſently bow the Knees of my Heart, with much Contrition and Tears, offering to thee my ſad and wounded Conſcience, that thou, by the Medicine of thy Grace, mayſt heal the ſame, and bind up more ſtrongly my ſaid Purpoſe than ever it was before, tying it as it were with a moſt firm and eaſy Bandage. It ſhall not repent me ever, I hope, of my good Reſolution and Undertaking, but rather I will give Thanks ; forasmuch as having conſented and vowed to be thy faithful Soldier for ever, and to fight under thy Croſs to the end, there is now no flinching back for me. Yea, being afflicted, I will give thee with my whole Heart Thanks ; becauſe this is that which I have chiefly deſerved to receive from thee, my Lord ; and which, having thus ſurrender'd my ſelf to thy Diſpoſal, I ought never to be aſhamed or afraid of.

O Almighty and moſt Merciful Lord, who haſt created me of nothing, and who foreſaweſt from the beginning the Infirmity and the Fall of Man ; Powerful art thou, in thy moſt tender Grace and Mercy, to pardon me all my Tranſgreſſions that I have ever committed,

mitted; to make up and supply all what I have left undone, to purify my Uncleanneſs, to ſtrengthen my Weakneſs, to reſtore again the things that are loſt, to enlighten ſuch as are dark, to rekindle ſuch as are extinct, to rebuild ſuch as are ruinated, to recover the neglected, to correct the depraved, to level the uneven, to ſmooth the rough, to make ſtraight the crooked, to ſet right the diſlocated, to reſtrain the curious, to recollect the ſcattered, to bind up the wounded, to heal the diſeaſed, to re-eſtabliſh the laſped; and in a word, to compoſe all whatever is in Diſorder, and to change the whole State of my Mind for the better; that ſo nothing may be wanting of my firſt Vow, and moſt ſolemn Engage-ment, made when I was devoted and conſecrated to thy Service; but that every occaſion of Evil may co-operate for good, yea even for the beſt unto me, who lie humbly proſtrate here at thy Feet.

Lo! this is the Change of the Right Hand of the moſt High; this is the Heavenly Viſitation; this is the manifold Donation and Diſtribution of the Divine Mercy; this is entirely the gracious Vouchſafement of Sovereign Charity.

§. IV. *The Communion of Saints:*

Praise ye the Lord all his Angels: Praise ye him all his Hoſts. Praise the Lord from the Heavens: Praise the Lord from the Earth.

A Ccept likewise, O Infinite Love, all the devout Services of thy Holy Church Universal; with the unanimous Conſent of the whole Heavenly Court, for a Thank-offering to thy Name. And may all the
Saints;

Saints, who from the very beginning of the World have through thy Grace been call'd and enlighten'd : Also all the Faithful, bearing the Name of Christ, in every People, and Tribe, and Language and Nation, both they who are unto this Day, and they who have been before us, and they that shall be after us, celebrate and laud together thy most sweet and glorious Name, which is blessed above every Name. Let them again and again repeat, with immense Joy, universal and united Praises to this thy Name : Let them repeat them as many times as there are Stars in the Heaven, or Fishes in the Sea, or Blades of Grass on the Earth : Let them repeat the same, after all this, as many times as there are Words, or Letters, or even Points in the whole Bible. And when they shall have done all this, and shall have offer'd me up, together with themselves, as a little Fellow-Member in the same Mystick Body ; then will I confess to thee, how that even yet all is far too short for that ineffable Praise which is due to thy most glorious Name ; the which I would fain magnify with my whole Strength, even with all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul and Spirit, and would by all ways and means exalt, yea, super-exalt thy great Majesty ; until at Length I arrive at those Heavenly Praises, which the Voices of Mortal Men are not able to reach, or any wise prosecute.

Thou see'st now, O my Soul, the Greatness and Preciousness of the Benefits of thy Creator and Redeemer, the Lord thy God ; Whom even the whole Creation is not sufficient to thank, no, not the whole Creation Visible and Invisible, which he hath created to the Glory of his Eternal Blessed Name, who verily needs not any Glory, or any one's Praise, since he alone is sufficient for himself, and there is no other besides ; he alone for himself alone ; his own Glory

is he; who will not give his Glory to another, nor take it from another.

Thus appears it, that the Multitude of his Benefits is so great, as it was impossible for me to set them all before thy Eyes: But out of the great Number, I have chosen three precious Gifts after the manner the *Eastern Magi* did, when they presented their Offerings to the Lord; in which *Three* yet we may conclude all the rest to be comprehended. For every Divine Benefit, if diligently attended to, will be found either to be of Nature, or of Grace, or of Super-excellence: And if there be any other than these, it may conveniently enough be reduced to one or other of the three afore-mention'd. In *Creation*, thou hast to consider the Benefit of Nature; in *Redemption*, the Benefit of Super-excellence; in *Justification*, the Gift of Grace.

For all and each of which, Glory be to thee, O Father, with the Son and Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, World without end. *Amen.*

FINIS.



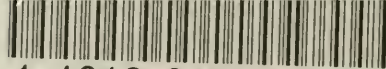












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